English Political Propaganda, 1377–1485.

Sarah K. Gaunt

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<u>Abstract.</u>

Previous historiography on propaganda has focussed on particular themes or time periods; this thesis provides a comprehensive and inclusive analysis drawing on a multidisciplinary approach to encompass the period c.1377-1485. The main conclusion is that propaganda was more prevalent and involved a larger proportion of the polity than previously thought. A conceptual framework based upon certain criteria used in Jacques Ellul's, *Propaganda the Formation of Men's Attitudes*, has been adopted to help define and identify propaganda.

One of the dominant themes is the prerequisite of communication to enable the propagandist to reach his audience and the opportunities available to do so. An examination of the various methods available, from official sources to rebel manifestoes, together with the physical communication network required demonstrates that there existed a nationwide environment where this was possible. The literary media used for propaganda include proclamations, poetry, letters, and bills. The political audience was broad in terms of understanding of literary and visual forms of communication and their ability to use the available mechanisms to convey their opinions. Whether it was a disgruntled magnate, merchant or yeoman farmer, there was a method of communication suited to their circumstances.

Visual propaganda was particularly important in politically influencing an audience, particularly for a largely illiterate population. This is an area that is often overlooked in terms of political influence until the Tudor period. The use of the human body will be a particular focus along with the more traditional aspects of art, such as heraldry.

The thesis considers the relationship between kings' personality, policy and propaganda. What emerges is that the personality of the monarch was essentially more influential than the use of propaganda.

Finally, incorporating the analysis of the previous chapters, the North, is examined as a regional example of the presence and impact of propaganda. The North was a subject of propaganda itself and there was a two-way flow of communication and propaganda between the North and Westminster revealing the political consciousness of the region and its role as an audience.

The overall argument of the thesis is that communication within the late medieval polity was essential and extensive. Propaganda was frequently used through a variety of media that could reach the whole polity, whether literate or not and not only in times of crisis.

<u>Contents.</u>

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Naturally, family endure the brunt of living in a research environment and my love and thanks go to William and Jack for being so patient and supportive. Finally, this is dedicated to my late parents who were always there.

Abbreviations.

BIHR	*Bulletin of Historical Research*
CCR	*Calendar of Close Rolls*, 22 vols. (London: HMSO, 1914-54)
Cely Letters	*The Cely Letters, 1472-1488*, ed. Alison Hanham, EETS, 273 (London: Oxford University Press, 1975).
Chronicles of London	*Chronicles of London*, ed. C. L. Kingsford (Dursley: Alan Sutton, 1977)
Chronicles of the Revolution	*Chronicles of the Revolution, 1397-1400: The Reign of Richard II*, trans. and ed. Chris Given-Wilson (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993)
Coventry Leet Book	*Coventry Leet Book*, *or, Mayor's Register, Containing the Records of the City Court Leet or View of Frankpledge, A. D. 1422-1555, with Divers Other Matters*, ed. Mary Dormer Harriss, 2 vols., EETS, original series, 134-5, 138 & 146 (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner and Co. Ltd, 1907-1913)
CPR	*Calendar of Patent Rolls*, 21 vols. (London: HMSO, 1895-1911)
Crowland	*The Crowland Chronicle Continuations: 1459-1486,* ed. Nicholas Pronay & John Cox (London: Alan Sutton for Richard III & Yorkist History Trust, 1986)
CS	Camden Society
EETS	Early English Text Society
EHR	*English Historical Review*
Ellul	Jacques Ellul, *Propaganda the Formation of Men's Attitudes,* trans. Kellen, Konrad and Lerner, Jean (New York: Vintage Books, 1973)
English Chronicle	*An English Chronicle,1377-1461: Edited from Aberystwyth, National Library of Wales MS 21068 and Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Lyell 34*, ed. William Marx (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2003)
Gesta Henrici Quinti	*Gesta Henrici Quinti: The Deeds of Henry the Fifth*, trans. Frank Taylor & John S. Roskell (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975)
Great Chronicle	*The Great Chronicle of London*, ed. A. H. Thomas & I. D. Thornley (London: G.W. Jones at the sign of the Dolphin, 1938)
Historical Collections	*The Historical Collections of a Citizen of London in the Fifteenth Century,* ed. James Gairdner, Camden Society, new series, 17 (1876)

Historie	*Historie of the Arrivall of Edward IV in England and the Finall Recoverye of his Kingdomes from Henry VI*, ed. John Bruce, Camden Society, old series, 1 (1838)
HMSO	Her/His Majesty's Stationery Office
HR	*Historical Research*
John Vale's Book	*The Politics of Fifteenth-Century England: John Vale's Book*, ed. Margaret Lucille Kekewich, Colin Richmond, Anne F. Sutton, Livia Visser-Fuchs, John L. Watts (Stroud: Alan Sutton for Richard III & Yorkist History Trust, 1995)
JMH	*Journal of Medieval History*
The Library	*The Library: Transactions of the Bibliographical Society*
Mancini	Dominic Mancini, *The Usurpation of Richard the Third: Dominicus Mancinus ad Angelum Catonem de occupatione Regni Anglie per Riccardum Tercium libellus*, trans. C. A. J. Armstrong (Gloucester: Alan Sutton, 1984)
NH	*Northern History*
PL	*The Paston Letters A.D. 1422-1509*, 6 vols., ed. James Gairdner (London: Chatto and Windus, 1904)
Plumpton	*The Plumpton Letters and Papers*, ed. Joan Kirby, CS, fifth series, 8 (1996)
St. Albans	*The St. Albans Chronicle:The Chronica Maiora of Thomas Walsingham*, *1376-1422*, 2 vols., ed. John Taylor, Wendy R. Childs & Leslie Watkiss (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2003-2010)
Stonor	*Kingsford's Stonor Letters and Papers 1290-1483*, ed. Christine Carpenter (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996)
TRHS	*Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*
Usk	*The Chronicle of Adam Usk, 1377-1421*, ed. and trans. C. Given-Wilson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997)
Warkworth	J. Warkworth, *A Chronicle of the First Thirteen Years of the Reign of King Edward the Fourth*, ed. James Orchard Halliwell, Camden Society, old series, X (1839)
Westminster	*Westminster Chronicle: 1381-1394*, ed. & trans. L. C. Hector & B. F. Harvey (Oxford: Oxford Medieval Texts, 1982)
York House Books	*The York House Books 1461-1490,* 2 vols, ed. Lorraine C. Attreed (Stroud: Alan Sutton, 1991)

Introduction.

The intention of this thesis is to expand on existing work on propaganda during the late medieval period, by adopting a multidisciplinary approach in order to encompass areas that have not been incorporated into the discussion. The aim will be to show that conditions existed in which propaganda could be produced, communicated, interpreted and cause a reaction. In turn this will allow a wider insight into the political community of the later medieval period, in terms of its members' ability to understand messages and act upon them and to show that politics was no longer the reserve of the elite. Mark Ormrod refers to this awareness of the political state by the majority of the population as 'political consciousness' and it is with this in mind that the thesis will be developed.[1] It is also important to remember that the production of propaganda was not limited to just the government, as the evidence will show that anybody with a message or complaint had the means and methods to make themselves heard. There was an increasing political consciousness amongst groups such as the mercantile community, the yeomanry and town dwellers which will be seen from the variety of genres of propaganda used together with the different spaces into which the propaganda was projected. K. B. McFarlane stated that the paucity of material leads the historian to the conclusion that 'men have to be judged from their actions alone' and that political success depended on 'powers of persuasion, a sense of audience', themes that concur with Ellul's study.[2] The success or failure of the propaganda is in some ways not that important, it is the fact that it existed that is more illuminating about political culture at this time. As Charles Ross argued it provides evidence of 'the growing awareness of the ruler's need to influence popular opinion'.[3]

While the term propaganda has diverged from its religious origins and become associated with politics in an unfavourable way, notably through its links with the regimes of the Soviet Union, Nazi Germany and more recently, North Korea, along the way in many people's minds becoming synonymous with manipulation and untruth, it remains a useful concept for forms of political communication. There has been much written about the subject

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[1] W. M. Ormrod, *Political Life in Medieval England, 1300-1450* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1995), p. 1.

[2] K. B. McFarlane, *The Nobility of Later Medieval England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973), p. 281.

[3] C. Ross, 'Rumour, Propaganda & Popular Opinion during the Wars of the Roses', in R. A. Griffiths (ed.), *Patronage, the Crown & the Provinces* (Gloucester: Sutton, 1981), pp. 15-32 (p. 29).

over many years by various authors.[4] Jacques Ellul's work on propaganda in the modern industrial age, although not immediately applicable in all its details, does provide a framework around which it is possible to examine the later medieval period.[5] Naturally there were limitations associated with adopting a modern twentieth-century definition and applying this to late medieval politics. Ellul's thesis was based on the existence of a modern communication system within a technologically-advanced and more highly-educated society, neither of which was extant during the period under discussion. Methodologically, his work drew on evidence produced through research, such as opinion polls and the availability of huge amounts of contemporary material. Historians of the late medieval period must recognise that they are examining a very different society and they have scant resources to draw on by comparison, many of which, such as, the chronicles, are inherently biased so providing accurate or informed evidence is much harder. What Ellul's approach does allow for, however, is the application of a broader set of hypotheses about the nature and potential of political persuasion and a greater appreciation of the extent of the role of all methods of communication. Previous historiography has focussed on the specific, whether by genre, time period or social class, whereas the adoption of Ellul's sociological method enables the historian to take a wider perspective of the extent and variety of medieval communication and examine it through the response of the polity.

From his theory the thesis will draw on the themes of *agitation* and *integration* propaganda as a methodology to survey the evidence for political propaganda. *Agitation* propaganda according to Ellul is explosive and works within or even creates a crisis situation.[6] *Integration* propaganda, on the other hand, seeks conformity and has a long term-goal and requires a more comprehensive and complex approach.[7] Using these two concepts provides an opportunity to remove the usual negative connotations associated with the word propaganda, often associated with regimes where political discourse was not extant, and enables the historian to gain a fuller perspective about the way in which the late medieval polity communicated and indeed participated in political dialogue.

Communication is integral to the success of propaganda, according to Ellul, and this too will be examined through evidence of the physical movement of information from primary

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[4] Ellul; J. A. C. Brown, *Techniques of Persuasion from Propaganda to Brainwashing* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1963).
[5] Ellul.
[6] Ibid., p. 72.
[7] Ibid., p. 77.

sources such as city records, letters and wills.[8] It will become evident that the country was well connected by transport networks, both internally and externally, either over land or by sea, so providing the necessary environment for propaganda opportunities.

The thesis will consider the work of not only political historians but also cultural and art historians to encompass a more complete historiography of the period in terms of propaganda. The interplay of economic, religious and literary developments is also taken into consideration and the whole of the medieval polity will be included in the analysis and not just the king and nobility.

Historiography.

The period 1377-1485 is not often studied as a whole, the reign of Richard II ending fourteenth-century study and only occasionally being incorporated with Henry IV and Henry V, and the Wars of the Roses is usually treated as a subject on its own. The reign of Richard II heralded the beginning of an attempt at a new style of kingship, and the death of Richard III marked the end of a long period of dynastic rivalry, domestic conflict and the middle ages. This period was defined, first, by foreign war with the Hundred Years War and second, by the domestic unrest of the Wars of the Roses. It saw three usurpations, three minorities and one readeption and provided a challenging political climate for the king and government – an environment in which propaganda was able to flourish.

The historiography of the period of the Wars of the Roses was dominated by the work of the Victorian historians William Stubbs, William Denton and Charles Plummer and their view that the wars originated with the barons and their affinities, leading to the phrase 'bastard feudalism' conceived by Plummer.[9] K. B. McFarlane countered their argument, that rather than being an issue of social instability it was actually a failure of kingship.[10] The current debate is still varied in opinion with Christine Carpenter and John Watts regarding the wars as a result

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[8] For the purposes of the thesis 'information' will refer to any official sources, news, gossip, facts - which when it becomes 'active' may be 'propaganda' with the intention to *agitate* or *integrate.*

[9] William Stubbs, *The Constitutional History of England in its Origin and Development*, 2 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1874-78); W. Denton, *England in the Fifteenth Century* (London: G. Bell, 1888); John Fortescue, *The Governance of England: Otherwise Called the Difference between an Absolute and a Limited Monarchy*, ed. Charles Plummer (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1885).

[10] K. B. McFarlane, *England in the Fifteenth Century* (London: Hambledon Press, 1981).

of constitutional shortcomings rather than those of the king, Henry VI in particular.[11] The debate on this particular period led to a discussion on the role of propaganda and the need for persuasive communication but these studies have tended to focus on either a limited time-span or genre, for example, proclamations.[12] James Doig's work on late medieval proclamations highlighted the effort put into the circulation of proclamations as a means of reaching a large audience. However, until the arrival of the Yorkists these proclamations were not always accurate in their translation into the oral and often any propagandist message was lost.[13] Colin Richmond's definition of propaganda as solely the manipulation of information by the government is too restricted and also provides for too sharp a distinction between propaganda and communication as it excludes other political groups.[14]

It is the intention of this thesis is to draw together the various areas of royal and non-royal propaganda previously discussed for the whole period to produce a more complete picture of the styles of propaganda that were utilised by late medieval society and their impact on politics. Kevin Sharpe's book on the Tudors has provided many ideas for approaching the subject using a multidisciplinary approach which will broaden the research to include a cultural as well as political emphasis to advance a more comprehensive examination of the role of propaganda.[15] The rationale behind Sharpe's research was to see 'to what extent the rhetoric and style of each ruler shaped the politics of the reign; how different monarchs appropriated, revised and redeployed vocabularies and symbols that conveyed authority'.[16] His approach,

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[11] Christine Carpenter, *The Wars of the Roses: Politics and the Constitution in England, c.1437-1509* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997; John Watts, *Henry VI and the Politics of Kingship* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

[12] A. Gransden, 'Propaganda in English Medieval Historiography', *JMH*, 1 (1975), 363-81; Ross, 'Rumour', pp.15-32; James A. Doig, 'Propaganda, Public Opinion and the Siege of Calais in 1436', in Rowena E. Archer (ed.), *Crown, Government and People in the Fifteenth Century*, The Fifteenth Century, 2 (Stroud: Alan Sutton, 1995), pp. 79-106 (pp. 80-81); A. Allan, 'Royal Propaganda and the Proclamations of Edward IV', *BIHR*, 59 (1986), 146-154; A. Allan, 'Yorkist Propaganda: Pedigree, Prophecy and the "British History" in the reign of Edward IV', in R. A. Griffiths (ed.), *Patronage, Pedigree and Power in Later Medieval England* (Gloucester: Alan Sutton, 1979), pp. 171-192; C. Richmond, 'Propaganda in the Wars of the Roses', *History Today*, 42 (1992), 12-18; P. S. Lewis, 'War Propaganda and Historiography in Fifteenth Century France and England', *TRHS*, fifth series, 15 (1965), 1-21.

[13] James A. Doig, 'Political Propaganda and Royal Proclamations in Late Medieval England', *HR*, LXXI (1998), 253-280.

[14] Richmond, 'Propaganda', pp. 12-18.

[15] Kevin Sharpe, *Selling the Tudor Monarchy: Authority and Image in Sixteenth-Century England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009).

[16] Sharpe, *Selling the Tudor Monarchy*, p. 8.

essentially an examination of the methods of representation used by the king to his subjects to express his authority, is one that can usefully be applied to the fifteenth century, while recognising that others were also in a position to deploy at least some of these modes of representation.

<u>Literary sources.</u>

The majority of the propaganda types considered in this thesis will therefore be those produced by the crown and those working for it; but others in society also expressed views on politics. This is evident in the case of propaganda expressed in literary forms. C. L. Kingsford and Antonia Gransden have both produced seminal works on the literature of the late medieval period which provide an invaluable basis from which to proceed.[17] The sources include chronicles; letters – official and private; poetry; genealogies and 'official histories'. Each has its own specific purpose; for example, 'official histories' such as the 'Record and Process', were produced with the aim to *integrate* an insecure dynasty often combined with genealogies to justify an usurping monarch. The private letters of families such as the Pastons, Stonors, Plumptons and Celys provide rich material for understanding the thoughts and concerns of the gentry as well as contemporary comment on events.[18]

Royal proclamations although written were usually communicated orally to an audience and therefore bridge both the literary and oral genre. Historians such as Alison Allan and James Doig have emphasised the propagandist use of proclamations, particularly during the Wars of the Roses.[19] Like proclamations, poetry provided a both written and oral medium through which political complaint and satire was expressed, sometimes on behalf of the government, often by those in opposition.[20]

Newsletters and bills were often the only means of communication for the general populace once the official avenues were perceived as biased.[21] These were usually posted in

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[17] C. L. Kingsford, *English Historical Literature in the Fifteenth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913); A. Gransden, *Historical Writing in England, c.1307 to the early sixteenth century*, 2 vols (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1982).

[18] *Cely Letters*; *PL*; *Stonor*; *Plumpton*.

[19] Allan, 'Royal Propaganda'; 'Yorkist Propaganda'; Doig, 'Propaganda', pp. 80-81; 'Political Propaganda', pp. 253-280.

[20] V. J. Scattergood, *Politics and Poetry in the Fifteenth century* (London: Blandford Press, 1971), provides a comprehensive survey.

[21] Wendy Scase, '"Strange and Wonderful Bills": Bill-Casting and Political Discourse in Late Medieval England', in Rita Copeland, David Lawton and Wendy Scase (eds), *New Medieval Literatures 2* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), pp. 225-247 (p. 237).

public spaces such as doors and windows and were even scattered along highways to be picked up and disseminated by travellers.[22] The recent work of Clementine Oliver suggests that the use of political pamphlets indicated their use was a reflection of the growth of public opinion as politically significant in the period before the printing press.[23] These literary sources provide contemporaneous information not only for events but also provide evidence of an extensive communication network which in turn informs the nature and extent of the audience.

The role of the visual genre.

The visual genre is of particular interest: it has not received as much interest from political historians of the period as it merits, often being regarded as the poor relation to the great art of the Tudors and the renaissance. In an age of poor literacy the use of the pictorial was of great importance in communicating, and medieval society was used to visual images, whether from church paintings, well established processions or the use of heraldry. As a consequence of such traditions, the medieval polity had an established visual vocabulary with which to decipher and interpret the symbolism. As Keen stated 'the experience of earlier generations had attuned minds to looking for significance in the visual, and to its importance as a means of communication'.[24] Keen also emphasised the importance that the increase in literacy had on the visual genre and how together messages, either social or political, were more effectively communicated.[25] This suggests that the literary genre and the visual genre benefitted from a symbiotic relationship, underpinning the notion that communication was important during the period along with increasing political consciousness.

Art historians such as Theodore Rabb and Sidney Anglo have argued that art was merely for entertainment and had no subliminal political agenda.[26] Their work perhaps relies on the fact that during the Tudor period the audience was more literate and that art had indeed become less of a medium for communication with the illiterate. During the later medieval period it becomes apparent that the visual genre was of great importance in communicating with large parts of the population and the work of art historians, such as Erwin Panofsky and

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[22] Scase, '"Strange and Wonderful Bills"', p. 238.

[23] Clementine Oliver, *Parliament and Political Pamphleteering in Fourteenth-Century England* (Woodbridge: York Medieval Press, 2010).

[24] Maurice Keen, 'Introduction', in Peter Coss and Maurice Keen (eds), *Heraldry, Pageantry and Social Display in Medieval England* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2003), pp. 1-16 (p. 8).

[25] Keen, *Heraldry*, p. 6.

[26] Theodore K. Rabb, 'Play, not Politics', *Times Literary Supplement*, 10 November 1995, 18-20; Sidney Anglo, *Images of Tudor Kingship* (Guildford: Seaby, 1992).

Paul Binski, helped to reveal this role of art in politics and society.[27] Panofsky stated that 'the historian of political life, poetry, religion, philosophy, and social situations should make analogous use of works of art' and Binski saw the connection of the use of art as a means of political legitimisation, particularly by the court.[28] Both argued for the use of art as relevant for interpreting political communication, and this thesis will seek to confirm their premise through an interpretation of a broad range of visual media; as before with literary material it will be both royal and non-royal propaganda, which will be considered here.

Further discussion of this approach to art will refer to the works of Richard Marks, Nigel Saul and David Starkey who provide detailed insights into how the visual genre was often appropriated for political purposes.[29] The work of Marks and Saul concentrates on the large-scale memorial art of architecture, effigies and stained glass – usually found in churches but with a political rather than religious message. Marks believed that only this scale of art would have had any influence on public opinion.[30] Starkey's interest in the need to promote kingship through physical and artistic sources broadens the discussion on the role of the arts in influencing the polity.

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[27] Erwin Panofsky, *Meaning in the Visual Arts* ([Reprint] Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1993); David Starkey, 'Representation through Intimacy', in I. Lewis (ed.) *Symbols and Sentiments: Cross-Cultural Studies in Symbolism* (London: Academic Press, 1977), pp.187-224; Paul Binski, *Westminster Abbey and the Plantagenets: Kingship and the Representation of Power 1200-1400* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995); 'Hierarchies and Orders in English Royal Images of Power', in Jeffrey Denton (ed.), *Orders and Hierarchies in Late Medieval and Renaissance Europe* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1999), pp. 74-93.

[28] Panofsky, *Meaning*, p. 65; Binski, 'Hierarchies', pp. 82, 93.

[29] Richard Marks, *Studies in the Art and Imagery of the Middle Ages* (London: Pindar Press, 2012); *Image and Devotion in late medieval England* (Stroud: Sutton, 2004); 'Images of Henry VI', in Jenny Stratford (ed.), *The Lancastrian Court: Proceedings of the 2001 Harlaxton Symposium* (Donington: Shaun Tyas, 2003), pp. 111-24; Nigel Saul, 'Bold as Brass: Secular Display in English Medieval Brasses', in Peter Coss and Maurice Keen (eds), *Heraldry, Pageantry and Social Display in Medieval England* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2002), pp. 169-194; *Death, Art and Memory in Medieval England: The Cobham Family and Their Monuments 1300-1500* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001); 'The Commons and the Abolition of Badges', *Parliamentary History*, 9 (1990), 302-15; David Starkey, 'Ightham Mote: Politics and Architecture in Early Tudor England', *Archaeologia*, CVII (1982), 153-61; 'Representation through Intimacy'; 'Henry VI's Old Blue Gown', *The Court Historian*, 4 (1999), 1-28.

[30] Marks, *Studies in the Art and Imagery*, p. 106.

The importance of the audience and 'space'.

Throughout this process the importance of the audience will be examined to assess the impact of the propaganda, whether *integration* or *agitation*, on the viewer. Mark Ormrod states how the political audience had expanded by the end of the fourteenth century to include the landed gentry and the mercantile community.[31] This naturally had an impact the use of propaganda for these new audiences who needed to be communicated with. This is no easy task; as Michael Hicks stated, 'we can do little more than guess how widely appreciated were the rhetorical devices, Latin refrains, heraldic badges, or constitutional principles that were employed, and hence how "good" the propaganda was'.[32] Hicks argued that there is often scant evidence of who the target audience might have been although he does concede that messages were often altered if they were deemed not to have been effective.[33] Paul Strohm stated, in relation to textual sources, 'rather than win over a monolithic "audience" all at once, these texts must content themselves with partial or provisional gains in a fluid or indeterminate situation'.[34]

It is important to remember that the audience was not only the commonwealth; the king himself and his advisors were often the audience for propaganda at times of discontent. Propaganda was therefore a two-way communication that used a variety of genres depending on the audience, for example, large visual displays in the public arena were suited to a large proportion of the population with low levels of literacy and could be effective at either *integration* or *agitation*. Dissenters amongst the urban elite, however, would find hand-bills a more appropriate means by which to reach their audience. To judge whether this was successful it will be necessary to assess any reaction that was recorded, within the parameters of *integration* or *agitation*.

The 'space' where these events took place – whether public or private, sacred or secular – will be taken considered. Steven Justice emphasises the importance of both the church and shire court as venues where 'news of parliamentary deliberations and major events, the

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[31] Ormrod, *Political Life*, pp. 37-38.
[32] Michael Hicks, 'Propaganda and the First Battle of St. Albans, 1455', *Nottingham Medieval Studies*, XLIV (2000), 167-183 (p. 168).
[33] Hicks, 'Propaganda', pp. 168, 181.
[34] Paul Strohm, *Politique: Languages of Statecraft between Chaucer and Shakespeare* (Indiana: University of Notre Dame, 2005), p.10.

proclamation and display of royal writs' took place.[35] Did propaganda used in a sacred space have more gravitas and success than that used in a market square? Rebels had more restricted means with which to communicate their message, that is, they did not have sheriffs to read proclamations or large retinues to parade through a town. However, this did not prevent political dissent from taking place and being effective, often appropriating a 'space' usually reserved for official announcements such as a market place.[36]

Chapter I will explore questions of the nature of propaganda, its authorship and audience in general terms as outlined in the pages above. Other areas of discussion will include the role of literary and visual sources; and the nature of politics in the late medieval period. This chapter will seek to identify the range of types and methods of propaganda available to the medieval propagandist. It will consider those behind the production of propaganda, considering particularly the established regime but also assessing the involvement of its opponents. From this it should be possible to see how far political awareness filtered through late medieval society. Next it will be necessary to discern why propaganda was being used - had the normal channels of communication broken down or were there new concerns being expressed? Finally, the timing of the propaganda was also important, often being associated with times of political crisis.

Chapter II will provide a broad-ranging analysis of the role and significance of visual propaganda during the period. The late medieval period has not benefitted from an extensive study such as that for the Tudor period by historians such as Starkey, Anglo and Sharpe.[37] However, their work on visual spectacle informs the investigation for this chapter and reveals the importance of this period in enlightening the Tudors to the political importance of the visual genre in political life. As John Watts suggests 'the sphere of the visual clearly deserves equal or greater attention [than literate modes of communication]: it too possessed means and languages, and – hard as they are to decode - their impact may have been particularly significant in a society which was only partly literate'.[38]

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[35] Steven Justice, *Writing and Rebellion: England in 1381* (Berkeley & London: University of California Press, 1994), p. 58.

[36] James Masschaele, 'The Public Space of the Marketplace in Medieval England', *Speculum*, 77 (2002), 383-421 (p. 416)

[37] Above, pp. 11, 13, 14.

[38] John Watts, 'Looking for the State in Later Medieval England', in Coss and Keen (eds), *Heraldry*, pp. 243-267 (p. 244).

Visual images of this period have been regarded as free from inference, essentially pure and innocent, but historians such as Francis Haskell suggest that this was not necessarily the case.[39] Evidence from the period will be found to support Haskell's premise that art was used as a means of political communication. The chronicles have descriptions of the massing of huge retinues lavishly turned out, the wearing of livery, and the use and recognition of cognizances, and such features were incorporated into art and archaeological features. The fact that these images are commented upon in so many contemporary sources shows that not only were they part of everyday medieval life but that they also had a significance to the writer that he wished to record and pass on, that is, he felt that they had some historical or political relevance.

As well as the two distinctions of *agitation* and *integration* the thesis will further differentiate visual genre between 'art' and 'physical' propaganda. The former will include portraiture, architecture, stained glass and the heraldic motifs of livery. The effectiveness of the use of livery as a means of communication will be examined in the light of the legislation that was introduced to control its distribution together with the punishments for defacing badges.

An area of visual propaganda that is perhaps less well documented, in political terms, is that which could be called 'physical' propaganda, that is, the use of the human body rather than a work of art. The visual spectacle was an integral part of medieval life, whether it was progresses, processions and civic entries; coronations and crown-wearing; plays; extravagant martial displays; or executions and the display of bodies. Danielle Westerhof emphasised the importance that was attached to the body as a 'natural instrument' that was used for performance and communication. It was often a vehicle used to express 'transgressing the boundaries of the metaphorical social body' through its destruction in the form of public executions, particularly in cases of treason.[40] These events were staged in the knowledge that they would be watched by an audience who could be influenced by what they saw. In particular, the use of executions and the distribution of the heads and quarters will be analysed to see how monarchs used this as a method of political communication and control when faced with

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[39] Francis Haskell, *History and its Images* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), p. 5. A viewpoint in which Panofsky, *Meaning*, and Evelyn Welch, *Art and Society in Italy 1350-1500* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997) concur with Haskell. Anglo, *Images*, and Rabb, 'Play not Politics', dismiss the notion that art was used for political propaganda.
[40] Danielle Westerhof, *Death and the Noble Body in Medieval England* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2008), pp. 137, 140.

opposition. A further sub-genre of 'humiliation' was a significant method in belittling the cause of one's enemy through the use of a public downfall without recourse to death. It does however appear to be less well regarded by the audience, as perhaps less honourable than an execution, since it did not seem to fit in with either a legal or chivalric code of behaviour. The reactions by the audience to these genres will then be assessed in terms of whether they were successful at either *integration* or *agitation*.

In Chapter III the relationship between personality and propaganda will be examined, with a particular focus on royal propaganda, in order to determine the influence of each over political outcomes. The work of John Watts, Mark Ormrod, and David Starkey emphasised the crucial part that the king's personality played in his kingship.[41] Nevertheless Watts argued that political ideology was more influential than just personality alone in fulfilling successful kingship.[42] However, J. R. Lander and Anthony Gross concur in their conclusions that ideological matters were not relevant to the fifteenth century and consequently personality was critical.[43]

Therefore, one may assume that a monarch with the right personality, that is, one that adhered to the medieval notions of kingship, would experience little domestic unrest. However, when a king was weak or lacking in personality and the kingdom was not being ruled well what were the options – was it possible to cover up his deficiencies through the use of royal propaganda, or did it become increasing difficult to prevent his removal? The fulfilment of kingship was essential to the smooth running of the nation and any failure by the king to do so was a serious problem.[44] The personality of the monarch was the most powerful asset that could be beneficial or detrimental to the outcome of the reign. As Gerald Harriss has argued 'as political society grew, so it needed the monarchy more, not less; to distribute patronage and power, to regulate and harmonize its tensions, and to provide a sense of direction and

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[41] Watts, *Henry VI*, p. 363; Ormrod, *Political Life*, p. 82; David Starkey in David Starkey, D. A. L. Morgan, John Murphy, Pam Wright, Neil Cuddy & Kevin Sharpe (eds), *The English Court: from the Wars of the Roses to the Civil War* (Harlow: Longman, 1987), pp. 1-24 (p. 6).
[42] Above, p. 11, n. 11.
[43] Anthony Gross, *The Dissolution of the Lancastrian Kingship* (Stamford: Paul Watkins, 1996), esp. p. xv.
[44] Ernst H. Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Mediaeval Political Theology* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957); Watts, *Henry VI*.

identity'.[45] The success or failure of a monarch to discharge kingship was the basis for discontent and thus protest which was reflected in propaganda.

The thesis then seeks to establish whether personality or propaganda was more instrumental in maintaining domestic harmony. In order to achieve this, parameters have been chosen as a means of trying to achieve this objective: first, domestic unrest and secondly, taxation together with support for foreign war. These parameters will be explored in a series of case studies with the intention of revealing whether outcomes were influenced more by personality or through the use of royal propaganda. The extent of uprisings during a reign was indicative of dissatisfaction with the running of the realm – a fault that was ultimately, although not explicitly, laid at the door of the king. Often it was attributed to poor counsel to avoid the charge of treason but however it was addressed it was often regarded as the result of poor kingship. The raising of taxes, particularly direct taxation, was usually for the defence of the realm, which was dominated first by the Hundred Years' War and then the Wars of the Roses. The ability of the king to raise both sufficient funds and troops for a campaign was a reflection of his political skills and personal charm, particularly in hard economic times. The reaction of the polity to these parameters will be assessed in order to establish whether royal propaganda or personality were more effective in achieving the desired outcome. To ascertain the outcome between these criteria a detailed assessment of the personality of each monarch will be undertaken using contemporary views together with later historiography. This will then form a basis upon which to assess the outcomes of the parameters discussed above and determine whether propaganda or personality had the greater impact.

The final chapter, developing on the conclusions of the previous chapters, will endeavour to put into context at a regional level the use of propaganda in the North of England. In terms of historiography, the region had become associated and even to a degree defined by the political aspirations of the Neville and Percy families and their affinities, especially during the Wars of the Roses. Their rivalry drew the region, despite its geographical position, into the major political conflicts of the period. Thus, the political ambitions of other inhabitants of the region, such as the mercantile community and lesser gentry, have been overlooked in terms of their influence upon the politics of the North. The chapter will seek to address this through an

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[45] Gerald Harriss, 'Political Society and the Growth of Government in Late Medieval England', *Past and Present*, 138 (1993), 28-57 (p. 56).

examination of the records of the city of York and the letters of the Plumpton family to show the political concerns of both the Northern mercantile community and gentry.

The aim will be to demonstrate the involvement of the North in contemporary politics and political communication despite its geographical distance from the locus of Westminster and the royal household. This is an area of differing historiographical approaches between those historians who believe that the politics of the county were exclusively dominated by the magnates and those who put forward the case for the might of the gentry, with all the implications that might be taken from this for the role of royal propaganda in relation to the region, and for the use of propaganda by others.

The work of Christine Carpenter forged a new direction in the study of medieval life, that is, the role of the county in the polity, her emphasis being that the nobility of a county were the ones who drew it into the political sphere.[46] Echoing the same theme in the north Anthony Pollard's work has similarly shone light on the nature of regional politics and the involvement of the county community.[47] However, M. J. Bennett stated that the county community was capable of working independently of noble influence as his work on Cheshire revealed.[48] R. A. Griffiths and Mark Ormrod also argued that the nobility did not always dictate county or city politics.[49] This thesis will show that areas within the North did pursue their interests irrespective of noble interests, particularly in the case of York. Other uprisings were apparently independent of magnate influence, but due to the nature of the structure of the county polity, magnate interest was often involved in order to protect their assets. It is also worth remembering that the nobility was not always resident within the county on a permanent basis and so there were opportunities for the county to express their concerns free from direct noble presence.

The North as an area was regarded by contemporaries as any land north of the Trent. For the purposes of the thesis the area will be restricted to Yorkshire and the North-east and the main city focussed on will be York. York was historically an important religious centre,

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[46] Christine Carpenter, *Locality and Polity: A Study of Warwickshire Landed Society 1401-1499* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

[47] A. J. Pollard, *North-Eastern England During the Wars of the Roses: Lay Society, War and Politics 1450-1500* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990).

[48] M. J. Bennett, 'A County Community: Social Cohesion amongst the Cheshire Gentry, 1400-1425', *NH*, 8 (1973), 24-44.

[49] Ralph A. Griffiths, 'Local Rivalries and National Politics: The Percies, the Nevilles, and the Duke of Exeter, 1452-55', *Speculum*, XLIII (1968), 589-63; Ormrod, *Political Life*, p. 45.

the capital of the region and also, for part of the period, extremely vital economically. It had a well-developed communications network as a result of its religious and mercantile communities. These two communities influenced the provision of education within the city and its environs. An examination of two regional primary sources offer evidence of the connections between the North and the rest of the country. The *York House Books* provide confirmation of the important role of York in the politics of the day with detailed information about the politics of the city and its involvement with royal and other propaganda during the unsettled years of the Wars of the Roses.[50] The Plumpton letters provide a different, familial perspective on the events of the time in the North.[51] The letters reveal the legal machinations of an upwardly mobile and avaricious family and catalogue national as well as local issues, exhibiting a sophisticated level of communication, knowledge of political events, and, inevitably, gossip and hearsay.

The North was often the subject of propaganda, royal and otherwise, and in evaluating this contemporary views and attitudes towards the North will be explored to assess the widely-held belief that the region was barbarous and wild. Once again the importance of good communication and local transport networks will be addressed. Case studies will focus on the North as both a *producer* of and *audience* for propaganda. The different genres of propaganda will be used to demonstrate the significant role that the region played in the politics of the late medieval period. The differing relationships that the North had with each monarch will be analysed, from the seeming coolness of Edward IV to the region to his brother, Richard III's fondness for the area and its people.

Through these chapters it will be shown that propaganda, in different forms, was extant throughout late medieval life at many levels and in many spaces. It will be demonstrated how it was used and required in order to influence political events, by the crown but not only by the crown, with evidence of participation spreading wide and deep. The thesis will reveal that the political community was greater than just the elite and stretched geographically and socially further than just the environs of London.

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[50] *York House Books*.

[51] *Plumpton*.

CHAPTER I

Theory: Methods and Opportunities

The first task of the propagandist is to catch his audience's attention.[1]

Trying to examine propaganda within the context of fifteenth-century history is difficult for a variety of reasons. First, the term propaganda did not originate until the seventeenth century, a good hundred years after the period under discussion. Second, the term has become synonymous with political ideologies such as Fascism and Communism and their blanket indoctrination which is associated with an efficient modern communications network. Finally, there is usually an underlying current in any discussion of propaganda that hints at there being a certain amount of 'untruth' involved in its use. However, by paring these 'modern' arguments back to the bone it is possible to see similarities in the nature and dissemination of propaganda during the late medieval period.

First, it is the intention here to apply the insights of social scientists and communications theorists such as Philip Taylor that we should be cautious in the application of what may be instinctive value judgements to the study of propaganda. As Taylor reminded us, 'propaganda thus becomes a process for the sowing, germination and cultivation of ideas and, as such, is – or at least should be – neutral as a concept. The problem is that human beings frequently inject morality into processes. Yet before we can peel away the multifaceted layers of this glass onion, we first need to understand how it historically acquired a pungency it does not inherently possess. When the Vatican gave us the word 'propaganda' in the seventeenth century to describe its organization to defend 'the true faith' against the challenge of the Protestant Reformation, the heretics shouted foul at such outside interference in the development of their 'natural' religious thought processes. The legacy of distrust against the word in Protestant societies remains to this day. But its recent pejorative connotations date mainly from the excesses of atrocity propaganda during the Great War of 1914-18 when the

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[1] J. A. C. Brown, *Techniques of Persuasion from Propaganda to Brainwashing* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1963), pp. 9-36.

modern 'scientific' use of propaganda came of age'.[2] In this thesis the central theme will be developed on the basis of the model in the work of Jacques Ellul.[3] Although Ellul's work focuses on the era of mass production, it enables us to identify certain criteria for use in our analysis which are as relevant in the fifteenth century as they were in the twentieth century. Ellul differentiated between what he saw as *agitation* propaganda and *integration* propaganda. The former he regarded as communication leading men to action, perhaps in the form of rebellion. The latter he defined as communication intended to make men adjust to desired patterns.[4] Most authorities writing on propaganda and political communication in the fifteenth century have not advanced such a sophisticated typology. For example, early in the 1980s Charles Ross argued that rumour was used to create a reaction whilst the use of propaganda, in his definition, was to 'appease and assuage'. He further writes of 'conscious attempts to mould "public opinion" by the use of official propaganda', referring to 'all the then known propaganda devices', such as political songs and poems, ballads and rhymes, broadsheets pinned up in public places, and so on.[5] Ross's approach suggests that propaganda was reactive rather than proactive. This thesis places the emphasis on propaganda being used for both purposes whilst interpreting rumour as a form of *agitation* propaganda in itself.

Colin Richmond widened the debate in the early 1990's by identifying a dichotomy between publicity and propaganda: 'the natural, almost reflex promotion of the iconography of kingship by all government that is publicity, and the deliberate manipulation of information for a limited purpose by the government of the day that is propaganda'.[6] The former he saw as the natural, relatively neutral, activity of government, the latter as a distortion, an approach suggestive of the implicit moral judgement challenged by Taylor and Ellul. The restrictions on Richmond's definition also do not allow for rebel protest, for example, to be considered as propaganda and his approach therefore denies the presence of a political voice outside of Westminster. This complicates the issue with the entry of another essentially modern term,

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[2] Philip M. Taylor, *Munitions of the Mind: A History of Propaganda from the Ancient World to the Present Day* ([3rd edn.] Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003), pp. 2-3.

[3] J. Ellul, *Propaganda the Formation of Men's Attitudes,* trans. Konrad Kellen and Jean Lerner (New York: Vintage Books, 1973), pp. 70-79.

[4] Konrad Kellen, 'Introduction', in Ellul, *Propaganda*, pp. i-viii (p. vi).

[5] C. Ross, 'Rumour, Propaganda and Popular Opinion during the Wars of the Roses', in R. A. Griffiths (ed.), *Patronage, the Crown and the Provinces* (Gloucester: Sutton, 1981), pp. 15-32 (pp. 17, 22-23).

[6] C. Richmond, 'Propaganda in the Wars of the Roses', *History Today*, 42 (1992), 12-18 (p. 13).

publicity. There is the danger of beginning to identify the differences between not only propaganda and publicity but advertising and public relations. One can equally apply Ellul's *agitation* and *integration* criteria to publicity and the outcome would be the same as that that may be identified as propaganda. Therefore, all the publicity or rhetoric to legitimise kingship will be embraced by the term propaganda for the purposes of this thesis.

Richmond also stated that there is 'no propaganda whatsoever … until the Wars of the Roses'.[7] This was not the case and indeed its use was recognised before the Wars of the Roses as identified in the *Anglo Saxon Chronicle* discussed by Antonia Gransden and peaked with the later Tudor period.[8] David R. Carlson identifies the early presence of propagandist material 'from early in the fourteenth century, evidence is that something like agitation and propaganda operations were taken on within the English state', he further comments that 'by the late fourteenth century, poets too were implicated in this communicative circuit, by which the state government was attempting to shape knowledge and practice by the pre-emptive management of information'.[9]

Kevin Sharpe's study of the Tudor publicity machine provided a valuable multidisciplinary approach to the representation of royalty and accepted the reality of propaganda and its usefulness as a concept.[10] Sharpe said that authority 'needs … to be performed, written and displayed: to be publicized'.[11] Sharpe also saw the value in examining different media next to each other in order to identify a more complete picture of political representation.[12] Richmond's assertion, that propaganda was only governmental and only occurred during the Wars of the Roses, is rather misleading and limiting. It fails to consider the many other genres deployed and the social groups that engaged in propaganda during the late fourteenth and early fifteenth century. This thesis will seek to explore the nature of the propaganda employed by various groups during this period and seek to determine whether the aim was *integration* or *agitation* and whether the genre used was written, oral or visual. Sources examined will be official, governmental and also sources from other groups, including rebels,

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[7] Richmond, 'Propaganda', p. 13.

[8] A. Gransden, 'Propaganda in English Medieval Historiography', *JMH*, 1 (1975), 363-81.

[9] David R. Carlson, *Poetry and Propaganda in Fourteenth-Century England* (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2012), pp. 26-27.

[10] Kevin Sharpe, *Selling the Tudor Monarchy Authority and Image in Sixteenth-Century England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009).

[11] Sharpe, *Selling the Tudor Monarchy*, p. 18.

[12] Ibid., p. 39.

merchants and clergy.

This approach provides a complimentary adjunct to Ellul's definition and together they should help to provide an interpretative framework for the study of late medieval political propaganda. The *integration* theory lends itself to a more subtle use of the propagandist's skills. In many respects elaborate genealogies could be regarded as a deliberate policy of integration by a usurping monarch. If genealogies were judged on the definition set out by Richmond, it would appear that they could be construed as publicity rather than *integration* propaganda. An usurping monarch was usually in a precarious position and a genealogy was a recognised method to justify their actions. They could be used to assuage domestic disharmony or indeed foreign resentment as the duke of Bedford demonstrated in the use of both a poem and a painting in Notre Dame to justify Henry VI's claim to the French throne.[13]

It may be useful to identify some of Ellul's ideas on propaganda. Ellul stressed that all media must be used for propaganda to be effective.[14] A medieval propagandist had a variety of media from proclamations to poems and parades available to use. Whilst there is still an apparent tension or a conflict of action then Ellul believed that propaganda cannot be said to have been successful although this conversely suggests that the *agitation* propaganda of the government's opponents has to have been successful.[15] During the period 1377-1485 it was inevitable that the political, social and economic climate would lead to a variety of conflicts and thus the necessity of using propaganda.

According to Ellul individuals who are not socially integrated, for example a hill farmer, would not be susceptible to propaganda.[16] This is rational as they would have little or no opportunity to hear proclamations read in a market place or to read any bills that had been posted. Although there would have been areas of the country which were isolated, they were few and far between and as will be shown the communications network of the period was quite far reaching and efficient. Perhaps the most interesting point that Ellul made was when he stated that ineffective propaganda is no propaganda at all but then he stresses the problems in

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[13] See J. W. McKenna, 'Henry VI of England and the Dual Monarchy: Aspects of Royal Political Propaganda, 1422-1432,' *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 28 (1965), 145-162; B. J. H. Rowe, 'King Henry VI's claim to France in picture and poem', *The Library*, 4th ser., XIII (1932-3), 77-88.

[14] Ellul, p. 9.

[15] Ibid., p. 11.

[16] Ibid., p. 6.

trying to assess the impact of propaganda.[17] This is a particular problem for late medieval historians when the sources are scant or unreliable. Ross noted that for the period of the Wars of the Roses in particular, much of the propaganda that he identified coincided with periods of crisis for the House of York.[18] An alternative interpretation may be that periods of domestic unrest were the result of successful anti-governmental *agitation* and likewise periods of peace may be seen as either the result of successful *integration* propaganda by the government or the failure of *agitation* propaganda by potential rebels. The relative success or failure of royal propaganda, and the extent of integration across the political community, will be the subject of the final chapter in which the North will be used as a geographical locus.

Education.

The increase in the use of propaganda coincided with the development of education and subsequent increase in literacy. Education was the principal criteria, according to Ellul, for propaganda to work.[19] He regarded it as an essential prerequisite for any society.

There was a development which saw in addition to traditional clerkly schooling more extensive teaching of the 3R's in the vernacular. Education was better provided for in the major towns with grammar schools and the universities of Oxford and Cambridge. Possibly the most important group to benefit from this change in education was the mercantile class. The necessity of dealing with paperwork and contracts ensured that they attained at least a rudimentary education. By the mid-fifteenth century apprenticeship to some London guilds was dependent upon being literate in English.[20] Both the elementary and grammar schools of the capital ensured that their pupils were taught in English to achieve this goal.[21] This would have been the case for other towns with large mercantile communities from York to Chipping Camden. The will of William Kyng, a draper, reveals that he owned three books, a bible, a Liber Regalis and a Chronicle.[22] Two of the books are stated as being in French; William may

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[17] Ibid., pp. ix-xvii (p. x).

[18] Ross, 'Rumour, Propaganda', p. 23.

[19] Konrad Kellen, 'Introduction', in Ellul, pp. i-viii (p. vi).

[20] Mary-Rose McLaren, 'Reading, Writing and Recording: Literacy and the London Chronicles in the Fifteenth Century', in Matthew Davies and Andrew Prescott (eds), *London and the Kingdom: Essays in Honour of Caroline Barron* (Donington: Shaun Tyas, 2008), pp. 346-365 (p. 347).

[21] McLaren, 'Reading, Writing and Recording', p. 349.

[22] 'Wills:18 Richard II (1394-5)', Calendar of wills proved and enrolled in the Court of Husting, London: part 2:1358-1688 (1890), pp. 310-316. URL: http:/www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=66936 date accessed: 26July 2012.

have understood French through his business. It was not only the mercantile group who understood the importance of education as even the wealthier freeholders were willing to make sacrifices in order to ensure a basic schooling for their offspring by sending them to relatives in towns to attend school.[23]

The rural population was largely dependent upon their parish clergy for any opportunity of schooling. Thorold Rogers identified certain examples of bills written by artisans proving that this class of men was not wholly illiterate.[24] Men such as the Paston bailiff, Richard Calle, were able to write as it was a necessary part of the job.[25] In his book on the Peasants Revolt of 1381 Steven Justice highlighted the fact that the letters that roused the peasants were rural in origin.[26] J. W. Adamson pointed out that the inability of many to write did not mean they were unable to read.[27] Therefore, although many people may have been unable to sign their name and would have been regarded as illiterate, they may still have been able to read.

Literacy.

Perhaps the most often cited factor in determining the use of propaganda during the period was the increase in literacy. There was a significant decline in the use of Latin with the emergence of a standard English. C. L. Kingsford saw a correlation between the displacement of Latin by English with political events.[28] Charles Ross also saw this as a crucial factor together with the need to influence popular opinion which may be viewed as a direct result of the increasing literacy.[29] It has been estimated that about forty percent of the population were literate in the fifteenth century.[30] McLaren highlighted the presence of libraries in fifteenth-

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[23] M. J. Bennett, 'Education and advancement', in Rosemary Horrox (ed.), *Fifteenth-Century Attitudes: Perceptions of Society in Late Medieval England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 79-96 (p. 89).

[24] H. S. Bennett, *The Pastons and their England: Studies in an age of transition* (Cambridge: The University Press, 1922), p. 114.

[25] Bennett, *Pastons*, p. 114.

[26] Steven Justice, *Writing and Rebellion England in 1381* (Berkeley and London: University of California Press, 1994), p. 4.

[27] J. W. Adamson, 'The Extent of Literacy in England in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries', *The Library*, 4th ser., X (1930), 163-193 (p. 164).

[28] C. L. Kingsford, *English Historical Literature in the Fifteenth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913), p. 3.

[29] Ross, 'Rumour, Propaganda and Popular Opinion', p. 15.

[30] V. J. Scattergood, *Politics and Poetry in the Fifteenth Century* (London: Blandford Press, 1971), p. 24, n. 21.

century London which further confirmed the increase in literacy of the population.[31] J. R. Lander made the point that the posting of propagandist bills would have been pointless unless there was a literate audience to read them.[32] Steven Justice writing about the rebel literature of 1381 believed that 'literacy' was more than the ability to write and cites the familiarity of the rebels with legal documents as evidence of their literate culture.[33] However, James Doig believed that the increase in literacy was not necessarily vital to conveying a political statement: 'whilst increased literacy enhanced the sophistication of political communication, it did not increase the number of people influenced by political messages. The mass of the population continued to be reached through aural and visual media'.[34] Doig's observation about the importance of the aural and visual concurs with the premise of this thesis, in particular with the role of the visual genre which is the subject of the following chapter. The emphasis by Ellul on conventional literacy as essential for propaganda perhaps appears less relevant to the medieval period but if the discussion focusses on visual literacy then it is still valid and that is the approach that will be adopted in this thesis.

Oral.

Joyce Coleman made the distinction between the oral tradition of performance by bards and that of aurality which was based on the reading of a written text.[35] Public reading, or aurality, turned literature into a social event and thus made it possible to influence a larger audience.[36] When a text was read precisely and repeatedly it could have a cumulative effect in promoting ideology to a large audience, as may be seen in the case of the Lollards. The distribution of texts would increase the geographical spread and demographic of the audience and the communal act of listening would give rise to discussion and debate about the subject of the text and thus empower different sections of society, in essence they were open to politicization. In communities which had little access to literature, the spoken word or oral

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[31] McLaren, 'Reading, Writing and Recording', p. 350.

[32] J. R. Lander, *Government and Community England 1450-1509* (London: Edward Arnold, 1980), pp. 152-172.

[33] Justice, *Writing and Rebellion*, pp. 52, 41.

[34] James A. Doig, 'Propaganda, Public Opinion and the Siege of Calais in 1436', in Rowena E. Archer (ed.), *Crown, Government and People in the Fifteenth Century*, The Fifteenth Century, II (Stroud: Alan Sutton, 1995), pp. 79-106 (pp. 80-81). A question might be raised about the impact of literacy in supporting more widespread reading aloud of texts.

[35] Joyce Coleman, *Public Reading and the Reading Public in Late Medieval England and France* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 28.

[36] Coleman, *Public Reading*, p. 28.

tradition would still have been an important method for hearing about events.

Visual.

The emphasis thus far has been on the increase in education and literacy during the second half of the fifteenth century. Although this was undoubtedly significant, no less important was the visual tradition. It is important to note that the visual genre was as capable of both *integration* and *agitation* propaganda as its literary counterpart. Visual literacy was more extensive amongst the population and made it an ideal medium for *integration* propaganda particularly events such as public displays or processions, which could reach a diverse audience. The study of art history, especially of the Tudor and Stuart periods by historians such as David Starkey, has provided a valuable source of information to the political historian.[37] The introduction of legislation to control, in particular, the giving of badges revealed that images were powerful at *agitating* strong reactions and allegiances. This thesis will suggest that visual literacy played a very prominent role in politics in its ability to either *integrate* or *agitate*. It is therefore the subject of its own chapter where it will be studied in detail.

The more established genres of the visual and oral tradition continued to be as expedient for communicating with the polity as the newer phenomenon of the written word, particularly in the vernacular. All of these media co-existed and, in the case of aurality, complemented each other to provide a stimulating environment for political discourse.

Communication.

Fundamental to the success of the increase in education and literacy was the ability to communicate using these new skills.[38] In their book on *Propaganda* Bertrand Taithe and Tim Thornton describe the importance of the symbiotic relationship between propaganda and communication:

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[37] David Starkey, 'Ightham Mote: Politics and Architecture in Early Tudor England', *Archaeologia*, CVII (1982), 153-161; 'Henry VI's Old Blue Gown', *The Court Historian*, 4 (1999), 1-28; Sidney Anglo, *Images of Tudor Kingship* (Guildford: Seaby, 1992); 'Representation through Intimacy', in I. Lewis (ed.), *Symbols and Sentiments* (London: Academic Press Inc., 1977), pp. 187-224; Richard Marks, *Studies in the Art and Imagery of the Middle Ages* (London: Pindar Press, 2012); Paul Binski, *Westminster Abbey and the Plantagenets: Kingship and the Representation of Power 1200-1400* (New Haven: Yale University Press, for the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, 1995).

[38] Ellul, pp. 9-10, discusses the relevance of communication.

First, propaganda allows an examination of the means of communication and persuasion in the political societies of Western Europe ... when a combination of increasing literacy and increasing incentives to involve the wider population revolutionized the need to transmit ideas and information. Secondly, it gives us the chance to look at the way that such communication in itself was viewed by participants in the political process and those outside it.[39]

Communication has a dual interpretation in this discussion. First, the use and dissemination of different methods, such as proclamations and letters, and secondly, the physical means of transport to reach both a regional and foreign audience.

i) Transmission of information.

People wanted to know what was going on, and as Colin Richmond remarked 'the fifteenth-century English political community was a small world'.[40] In 1436 a proclamation to the sheriffs of London illustrated both the methods and venues used by those seeking to 'tell or publish false rumours, …, or to write, set, fix up or cast forth any bulls, letters or other…writings to the prejudice of the king', and 'cast them forth in divers cities, boroughs, towns and other notable places, especially where a concourse of people is wont to be … so matter of discord and scandal may arise'.[41] This revealed the importance of controlling the communication of propaganda and the potential outcome if measures were not taken and it also showed that the opposition used the same methods and arenas where official government messages were disseminated. As Watts stated 'the widening political community of the later Middle Ages was matched by an expanding discursive community'.[42]

The crown had a regular network of messengers to keep them informed of events around the country, and in times of war they would be dispatched abroad. In the *Historie of the Arrivall of Edward IV*, recounting how Edward IV recovered his throne in 1471, the author describes how the king received 'dayly messages from the Lords at London, how that the bastard [of Fauconberg, Thomas Neville] who had assembled great people'.[43] William Cely

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[39] Bertrand Taithe and Tim Thornton (eds), *Propaganda: Political Rhetoric and Identity 1300-2000* (Stroud: Sutton Publishing, 1999), p. 3.
[40] C. Richmond, 'Hand and Mouth: Information gathering and use in England in the later middle ages', *Journal of Historical Sociology*, 1 (1988), 233-252 (p. 247).
[41] *CCR,1435-1441*, p. 60.
[42] John Watts, 'The Pressure of the Public on Later Medieval Politics', in Linda Clark and Christine Carpenter (eds), *Political Culture in Late Medieval Britain*, The Fifteenth Century IV (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2004), pp. 159-180 (p. 162).
[43] *Historie*, p. 33.

writing from Calais in 1482 reported that 'ther comys every day ffrom Sent Thomers to my Lord a messenger off my Lord Chamberleyn'.[44] During the war with Scotland Edward IV developed an efficient method of using mounted couriers who could cover 200 miles in less than 2 days.[45] These professional messengers were able to convey propaganda efficiently if required and report back any opposition propaganda. The major cities and towns also had their own officially employed messengers for the delivery and collection of information. In 1471 the mayor of London reported how they had received news of the battle of Barnet, in 'particulars which they had learnt from letters under the King's own hand as well as from eyewitnesses who had been specially dispatched for the purpose of reporting on the state of the field to the civic authorities'.[46] The city of Coventry sent officials to London, for example in 1425 W. Oxton was paid £1.1s. 4d. for riding to the capital three times.[47] From the account rolls of the York Mercers and Merchant Adventurers there is evidence in 1434 of direct communication between the city and the capital: 'item, paide to John Dene for beryng of a letter to London directe to the maire of London, iijs, iiijd'.[48]

C. A. J. Armstrong stated that most people were in fact reliant upon such hearsay for their news.[49] We know that lawyers such as the Plumptons' Godfrey Green would travel between the north and London and were thus able to collect or disseminate news fairly quickly along a given route. With other travellers on the road, such as pilgrims and players, there would have been a regular exchange of news and views. Unless such news ended up being recorded, such as the above in the Paston letters, it is not possible to estimate just how much information was potentially being circulated but it would appear to be quite considerable. The Paston letters provided a fairly comprehensive picture of the dissemination of news. Sir John Paston wrote of news of the spread of the plague in 1471: 'I kan not her by pylgrymes that passe the contre,

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[44] *Cely Letters*, p. 163.

[45] *Crowland*, p. 173.

[46] 'Folios 71 - 80: Aug 1470 - ', in *Calendar of Letter-Books of the City of London: L, Edward IV-Henry VII*, ed. Reginald R Sharpe (London, 1912), pp. 91-100. *British History Online* http://www.british-history.ac.uk/london-letter-books/voll/pp.91-100 [accessed 22 March 2016].

[47] *Coventry Leet Book*, p. 99.

[48] *The York Mercers and Merchant Adventurers 1356-1917*, ed. M. Sellers, Surtees Society, 129 (Durham: Andrews and Co., 1918), p. 43.

[49] C. A. J. Armstrong, 'Some examples of the distribution and speed of news in England at the time of the Wars of the Roses', in R. W. Hunt, W. A. Pantin, R.W. Southern (eds), *Studies in Medieval History: Presented to Frederick Maurice Powicke* (Oxford: Clarendon Press,1969), pp. 429-454 (p. 433).

nor noon other man that rydethe or gothe any contre, that any Borow town in Ingelonde is ffree ffrom that sykenesse'.[50] In 1462 John Russe updated John Paston on news and informed him that there are more tidings: 'but they were not publyshyd; but John Wellys shal abyde a day the lenger to know what they are'.[51]

News was also as important to the English abroad and in 1450 Henry VI wrote to the captain of the ship, *Nicholas of the Tower*, indicating that he had 'offered to carry word to the besieged town of Cherbourg of the rescue planned and bring us word of the town's present state'.[52] The movement of information, whether domestic or foreign, was obviously commonplace, and to that end there was an established transport network in place to facilitate this.

ii) Transport network.

As has been shown above there was an array of people travelling around distributing proclamations, letters and other correspondence. In order to maximise this movement there needed to be an efficient transport network that included road, river and sea travel. One tends to think that medieval society was very parochial with people remaining in their locality and not being subject to external influences but this was not the case. There is evidence, as discussed above, of extensive and regular movement around the country, particularly by road. The repair of roads was often the subject of a bequest in a will. In 1394, courier Thomas Chapman left money for the 'repair of highway between Kilbourn [Kilburn] and Eggeswere [Edgeware]'.[53] Other merchants also left such bequests – obviously valuing the importance of the state of the road as integral to their business and vital to communication.[54] It was not only the merchants who used the road system as many of the large landowners of the North also had estates in the south and vice versa, for example the Lords Beauchamp and Lovell had estates at Barnard Castle and Bedale respectively. This naturally led to a flow between London and the North of both landowners and their servants. The judge Sir Guy Fairfax would travel

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[50] *PL*, V, pp. 109-111.
[51] *PL*, IV, pp. 57-58.
[52] Henry VI to the master of the ship called the *Nicholas of the Tower,* 1450, in *John Vale's Book*, pp. 168-169.
[53] 'Wills: 20 Richard II (1396-7)', Calendar of wills proved and enrolled in the Court of Husting, London: part 2:1358-1688 (1890), pp.321-328. URL: http:/www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=66938 date accessed: 26 July 2012.
[54] Ibid.. Baker, William Barneby and skinner, William Olyver both left money for the repair of roads.

between the North-East and the London courts to deal with his clients' interests.[55] A letter to Sir William Stonor in 1479 described the journey that an officer of the bishop of Lincoln was about to embark on: 'to morowe I will be at Bannebury and ther until Monday next: from thennes to Leicester, and there until þe morowe next…: so to Newerk, and ther until ij daies …: thenne to Lincoln'.[56]

The *Crowland Chronicle* talked of the supporters of the Bastard of Fauconberg in Kent coming 'some by road, some by the river Thames'.[57] The use of inland waterways for transport was mostly commercial and based towards the east coast due to the continental trade routes.[58] This east coast transport provided valuable communication links to the continent and foreign news.

It was apparent that the late medieval polity was well provided for in terms of a transport infrastructure that facilitated the movement and flow of this information nationally and internationally when required. This circulation of man and material enabled regular communication, whether political or commercial, to take place and as such enabled political ideas and discourse to take place outside the boundaries of London, parliament and the court.

The aim of the next section is to ascertain when there was a need to influence public opinion and if so which methods were selected. By showing that propaganda, as defined above, was used it may be possible to reveal the changes that were taking place within English political society. To understand the motivation that led to the use and indeed need for propaganda it is necessary to assess the state of both the nation and its inhabitants. The main obstacle for the historian during this period is the inherent medieval use of exaggeration and inaccuracy. This coupled with often meagre sources makes it more difficult to establish an accurate picture although J. R. Lander felt that there was much merit to be found even in the poorest sources.[59]

Fourteenth- and early fifteenth-century England was dominated by the Hundred Years War. It influenced politics in terms of the taxation and the manpower required. The drain on

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[55] A. J. Pollard, *North-Eastern England During The Wars Of The Roses: Lay Society, War, And Politics 1450-1500* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), p. 24.
[56] *Stonor*, pp. 349-50.
[57] *Crowland*, p. 127.
[58] For a comprehensive review of medieval transport see John Langdon and Jordan Claridge, 'Transport in Medieval England', *History Compass*, 9/11 (2011), 864-875.
[59] J. R. Lander, *The Wars of the Roses* (Far Thrupp: Alan Sutton, 1990), p. 1.

these resources inevitably led to domestic unrest culminating in the Peasants' Revolt. Richard II's unorthodox approach to kingship alienated him from the nobility and saw the eventual demise of the Plantagenet dynasty. Henry Bolingbroke's usurpation of Richard II ushered in the new era of Lancastrian rule. Although his was an unremarkable reign Henry IV enabled his more dynamic son, Henry V, to inherit without dispute. Henry's vigorous reclaiming and defence of English assets in France, particularly his success at Agincourt, ushered in a period of pride with domestic politics in accord. However, his early death and his son's minority and subsequent inadequate kingship led to years of domestic upheaval and losses abroad known as the Wars of the Roses.

The origins and nature of the Wars of the Roses have been debated over several centuries. Historians of the nineteenth century, such as William Stubbs and William Denton, explored the dynastic aspect and the role of the barons in the conflict and suggested that it was a period of continuous bloodshed.[60] Charles Plummer's coining of the phrase 'bastard feudalism' focused on the use and misuse of the affinity by the aristocracy that caused domestic unrest.[61] However, it was not until K. B. McFarlane that a credible alternative view was proposed.[62] He saw the problem not as a dynastic struggle amongst 'overmighty' subjects but rather as one arising from the inadequacy of the king, Henry VI, to successfully fulfil the ideals of kingship. J. R. Lander and Charles Ross followed in the McFarlanite tradition and both emphasized the fact that there was little disruption to the country unlike Denton.[63] More contemporary views expressed by Christine Carpenter and John Watts took the view the conflict was a constitutional issue rather than one of personality.[64] Michael Hicks did not believe that it was Henry VI's kingship the led to the conflict, whilst Anthony Pollard has included economic factors and an inadequate political framework in his explanation of the

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[60] Keith Dockray, *Henry VI, Margaret of Anjou and the Wars of the Roses: A Source Book* (Stroud: Sutton Publishing, 2000), provides a good summary, pp. xxxiv-xxxix; William Stubbs, *The constitutional history of England in its origin and development*, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1874-78); Rev. W. Denton, *England in the Fifteenth Century* (London: G. Bell, 1888).

[61] Sir John Fortescue, *The governance of England: otherwise called the difference between an absolute and a limited monarchy*, ed. Charles Plummer (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1885).

[62] K. B. McFarlane, *The Wars of the Roses* (London: Oxford University Press, 1964); *England in the Fifteenth Century: Collected Essays* (London: Hambledon Press, 1981).

[63] Lander, *Wars*; Charles Ross, *The Wars of the Roses: A Concise History* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1976).

[64] Christine Carpenter, *Locality and Polity: A Study of Warwickshire Landed Society 1401-1499* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992); Watts, *Henry VI and the Politics of Kingship* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

crises but ultimately argued that it was Henry's weakness that contributed most importantly to the wars.[65]

The crises that took place during the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries could be said to be rooted in poor communication between the crown, nobility and the rest of the polity and it was this failure to effectively address the various issues that troubled the realm that led to misunderstanding, resentment and unrest. However, communication methods and networks were quite varied and extensively used which suggests that the problem lay with the chief communicator, the king, from whom the direction of the realm ultimately rested. The inability of a king to communicate with the various offices of state and thus the rest of the polity left a void into which disquiet could develop.

<u>The polity.</u>

What effect did the developments in education combined with the domestic crises already mentioned have on the attitude of the populace? Mark Ormrod stated that although those primarily involved actively in the political process were a minority 'there was no monopoly on political consciousness'.[66] Ormrod also believed that there was the evolution of public opinion across a large section of the population.[67] John Watts saw a connection between the talk of sedition and rumour and the inevitable legislation that it spurred as evidence of how 'the pressure of public expectations was strongly felt' by government.[68]

This meant that successful propaganda had the potential to affect a large number of people, such as merchants, who wielded not inconsiderable power within their own world. For example, the support of the staple merchants at Calais in 1460 was crucial to the Yorkist cause. Colin Richmond stated that the gentry had become politically independent and it was in fact their wishes that shaped political events.[69] Current historiography demonstrates that the wider polity was increasingly aware of politics, secondly that they wanted to be heard and, finally they had the means with which to communicate. It became increasingly apparent that they needed to be responded to and included in the political dialogue, usually reserved for the king

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[65] Michael Hicks, *The Wars of the Roses* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010); A. J. Pollard, *The Wars of the Roses* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Education, 1988).
[66] W. M. Ormrod, *Political Life in Medieval England, 1300-1450* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1995), p. 6.
[67] Ormrod, *Political Life*, p. 7.
[68] Watts, 'Pressure of the Public', p. 177.
[69] C. Richmond, 'After McFarlane', *History*, 68 (1983), 46-60.

and magnates, thus making the use of propaganda relevant.

Thus far propaganda has been defined as dependent upon the existence of certain criteria but it would be useful to bring some homogeneity to the term as it will be used in this thesis. Propaganda will be broken down into the following categories: *integration*, and *agitation*. Within these categories the genre employed whether literary, visual or oral will be identified and discussed. The literary genre will encompass proclamations, genealogies, official histories, pamphlets, letters and bills. Secondly, the oral tradition will include poetry and sermons. The visual genre will be the subject of its own chapter as it is an area that deserves a fuller evaluation than has been previously undertaken. The visual analysis will be divided into *art* and *physical*, with the former to include badges, clothing, paintings and architecture and the latter typified by processions, massing of armies and the destruction of symbols.

Methods.

Ellul's premise that the propagandist must utilise all possible methods was as applicable to medieval society as it is to the twenty-first century.[70] Essentially the medieval propagandist had three methods of dissemination available as outlined above and these methods often overlapped. The literary form has survived the centuries better than the oral tradition although certain literary genres, such as poetry, would also have been read out. The rise in literacy in the second half of the fifteenth century made the literary genre more accessible to a greater proportion of the population. The quantity of literature produced for public oration raises certain issues. First, it shows that the public, or at least a greater proportion of it, had an interest in politics.[71] The increase in political communication highlighted the growing importance that the government attached to influencing public opinion whilst often countering rumour. This was reflected in the various regional uprisings from Kent to Yorkshire confirming that the political audience extended through the whole kingdom.

Proclamations.

By the later middle-ages proclamations were the crown's main means of communicating with the population; whether it was to *agitate* to raise troops or reveal traitors or *integrate* by announcing a treaty they were the most effective means of mass communication available. The subject matter contained within the proclamations was extensive, ranging from

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[70] Above, p. 25, n. 14.
[71] Richmond, 'Hand and Mouth', pp. 233-252 (p. 237).

the granting of charters to the raising of troops for foreign war to the more mundane dealing with trading regulations.[72] James Doig highlighted the political necessity of proclamations for Edward III [73] whilst Alison Allan emphasised their importance during the Wars of the Roses.[74] Proclamations at once inform the historian of current issues whether mundane or sensational and had the facility to be both *integrational* and *agitational* in their content.

The majority of proclamations were produced in Latin until the mid-fifteenth century which meant that that they required translating into the vernacular, usually by a clerk in the sheriff's office. Proclamations were often made by criers employed by the town or city at public gatherings, such as fairs and market squares, where the audience would be large. Instructions as to the extent, frequency and immediacy of the distribution were attached to the proclamation and obviously varied with the contents. Doig emphasised that in most cases any propagandist appeal was contained in the preamble rather than the main body of text.[75] It was therefore at the discretion of the sheriff whether or not he incorporated it into the reading of the proclamation. Unfortunately, extant records do not reveal whether any of the preamble was orated at the time and thus any propagandist element cannot be proven with any certainty. Allan and Doig concur that despite the extensive use of proclamations as a frequent method of communication between both crown and local authority with the polity it was not until the Yorkists that they became overtly propagandist in nature.

The *Coventry Leet Book* provides an example of the space where the proclamation was to be read when Edward IV was calling for the suppression of liveries in 1472: 'this forsaide Privee seel was solemplye proclaimed in the open[(torn) market ne] xt after the resceyt'.[76] The problem of the abuse of liveries was a big concern for Edward which explains why it was proclaimed only two days after receipt. The medieval market square had a dual purpose as a space for economic activity and political communication.

The proclamations discussed above have been the official word of the crown but they were also a channel for dissent used by rebels or disaffected members of the establishment.

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[72] Alison Allan, 'Royal Propaganda and the Proclamations of Edward IV', *BIHR*, 59 (1986), 146-154 (p. 147).

[73] James A. Doig, 'Political Propaganda and Royal Proclamations in Late Medieval England', *HR,* LXXI (1998), 253-280.

[74] Allan, 'Royal Propaganda'.

[75] Doig, 'Political Propaganda', p. 266.

[76] *Coventry Leet Book*, p. 375.

Rebel proclamations have survived due to their inclusion in many contemporary chronicles which was indicative of their impact on public opinion. These proclamations tended to be produced in the vernacular which indicated the regional nature of many grievances and the social class that were voicing their concerns.

Genealogies.

An usurping monarch had to establish his legitimacy to the throne if he was to survive and genealogies were deployed as a means of bolstering a new and insecure regime. Without the acceptance that he was the rightful heir to the throne his position would never be secure, thus claims of hereditary right had to be well researched and persuasively presented. Memory played an important role to play in establishing legitimacy; as Robert Bartlett stated, 'in some areas of medieval life very long memories were cultivated. Genealogical memory was obviously important in a dynastic society'.[77] The elaborate genealogies may be viewed as *integration*, their main purpose being the justification for dynastic change. It has been claimed by J. W. McKenna that 'fifteenth-century England was distinguished for a series of royal governments which developed increasingly sophisticated methods of re-inforcing their increasingly tenuous claims to the throne'.[78] In an article on the genealogical *The Chronicle from Rollo to Edward IV* Raluca Radulescu states that it 'is illustrative of contemporary fifteenth-century anxieties over rightful kingship and governance of England' all necessary to justify a change in dynasty.[79] Further, Radulescu emphasises how important these pieces of prose were 'since it was through the dissemination of this type of material that the language of politics was shaped in the advent of the Tudor era.[80]

According to Alison Allan, Richard of York's pedigree had by 1461 become the cornerstone of Yorkist propaganda.[81] The core of the genealogies was based around ancient history and legends of earlier kings which were meant to emphasise the antiquity of the house of York and raise support. The fact that copies of the Yorkist pedigree have survived suggests

[77] Robert Bartlett, *The Hanged Man: A Story of Miracle, Memory, and Colonialism in the Middle Ages* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2004), pp. 114-115.
[78] J. W. McKenna, 'Piety and Propaganda: The Cult of Henry VI', in B. Rowland (ed.), *Chaucer and Middle English: Studies in Honour of R. H. Robbins* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1974), pp. 72-88 (p. 72).
[79] Raluca Radulescu, 'Yorkist Propaganda and The Chronicle from Rollo to Edward IV', *Studies in Philology*, 100 (2003), 401-424 (p. 402).
[80] Ibid., p. 412.
[81] Allan, 'Yorkist Propaganda', p. 172.

that these were consciously produced in quantity for distribution, although not in the same manner as poems or proclamations. They were sophisticated and designed for an educated audience who could read them at their leisure from the nobility to the gentry.[82] Thus their effectiveness as propaganda must have been restricted to those who were probably Yorkist in sympathy. Therefore, Allan's argument that 'because of the venerable heritage which they depicted, such documents were inherently propagandist' seems somewhat limited to the confines of the privileged few.[83]

Official histories.

An official chronicle was usually commissioned by someone wishing to express an official viewpoint.[84] Antonia Gransden believed that the official histories were intended only to please the king and his immediate circle.[85] It was only through dissemination via other chronicles and secondary sources that their message was transmitted and for this reason they could be called *integration* rather than *agitation* propaganda. Walsingham certainly used the 'Record and Process' in his chronicle, for example.[86]

Both the *Chronicle of the Rebellion* and the *Historie* were written at the behest of the government and as such may be viewed as propaganda.[87] They are still of value as accurate depictions of events despite being partisan and as a method of propaganda they were unusual.[88] In terms of style, the *Chronicle* was on the offensive, attempting to discredit both Warwick and Clarence whilst the *Historie* was an attempt to portray Edward IV in such a way as to make him attractive. Again the basis of the *Historie* was a further attempt to legitimise Edward IV's rule whilst referring to 'the pretensed auctoritie of Henry, than callyd Kynge'.[89] Gransden argued that the chronicles that were produced by the government were created only in 'exceptional circumstances' and provided a form of 'moral reinforcement'.[90] It could be

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[82] Radulescu, 'Yorkist Propaganda', p. 403. *The Chronicle of Rollo* was composed for a gentry audience.
[83] Allan, 'Yorkist Propaganda', p. 174.
[84] Gransden, 'Propaganda in Medieval', p. 363.
[85] Ibid., p. 364.
[86] Ibid., p. 368. Texts were also disseminated abroad as Waurin used the *Historie* in his work, p. 375.
[87] *Chronicle of the Rebellion in Lincolnshire,1470*, ed. J. Gough Nichols, *Camden Miscellany*, CS, original series, 39 (1847).
[88] A. Gransden, *Historical Writing in England II, c.1307 to the early sixteenth century* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1982), p. 261.
[89] *Historie*, p. 8.
[90] Gransden, 'Propaganda in Medieval', p. 377.

suggested that these chronicles were an attempt at creating an historical memory favourable to the Yorkist dynasty, knowing that the texts, or at least parts of, would be incorporated into other works.

Sermons.

The crown would use the pulpit to reach a large and captive audience in a way that perhaps proclamations were unable to. There, the word of God's anointed on earth would have had a certain gravity that a market place could not provide. The majority of the clergy would have acceded to the wishes of the crown in wanting to use their church as a mouthpiece for secular issues. The pulpit became increasingly important during the Hundred Years Wars as part of the media used by the crown to communicate with the people.[91] W. R. Jones regarded the use of *pro rege* prayers as a form of 'news service' aimed at influencing public opinion that the King's wars were also theirs.[92] Alison McHardy argued that the campaign for the Norwich crusade was financially successful through communication via the clergy.[93] McHardy also cited the example in 1432 when a mandate for prayers was issued prior to the departure of the duke of Bedford 'to France to recover, defend and conserve English rights'.[94] The Cely letters provided evidence of news being relayed on a visit to St Paul's Cross as Robert Cely wrote to his brother George in Calais: 'my brother Rychard Cely and I wer at Pollys Crosse to here the sarmon, and ther we herde fforste word that howr uncle the Dene of Yorke ys passyd to God'.[95]

Like most of these media of propaganda, however, sermons were not the exclusive property of the crown. The most infamous sermon of the period was perhaps the one given by Richard Scrope, archbishop of York who in 1405 used the pulpit to *agitate* his worshippers to rectify the apparent mis-governance of the realm. Scrope was later to pay for his *agitation* with his life which will be discussed more fully in Chapter IV on the North of England. Richard III used the pulpit to promulgate the story about Edward IV's illegitimacy to justify his usurpation. The late medieval sermon was utilized to disseminate information that came from the government and king and also could be used, in exceptional circumstances, to express complaint against the king. It is apparent that the use of sermons and prayers provided a regular

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[91] W. R. Jones, 'The English Church and Royal Propaganda During the Hundred Years War', *Journal of British Studies*, XIX (1979), 18-34 (p. 26).
[92] Jones, 'English Church', pp. 20, 30.
[93] Alison McHardy, 'Liturgy and Propaganda in the Diocese of Lincoln during the Hundred Years War', *Studies in Church History*, 18 (1982), 215-227 (p. 219).
[94] McHardy, 'Liturgy and Propaganda', p. 219.
[95] *Cely Letters*, pp. 13-14.

opportunity to either *integrate* or *agitate* the population whilst keeping them informed about political and military developments. This was necessary to maintain popular support in terms of finance and man power and importantly those prayers that related to war were possibly made in English to emphasise the importance of their being understood.[96]

Poetry.

V. J. Scattergood thought that political verse more than any other medium had real value in both the formation and manipulation of opinion.[97] Scattergood defined the role of a poet of political verse as follows: 'his proper mission was to celebrate victorious battles, to praise the heroes of the nation and to pursue its enemies with scorn'.[98] Scattergood remarked that early medieval political poems 'were oral and may have been sung before a noble audience in a castle assembly, or before burgesses and peasants in a market square, or by soldiers around the military camps'.[99] A. C. Spearing emphasised that poetry had to have an immediate effect upon the medieval audience and was often written with this aim in mind.[100] Poetry crossed the divide between the written and oral medium making it more accessible and thus potentially more useful as a propagandist's weapon.[101] Political verse of the period was mostly written in English as it was intended to be heard by a wide audience, the majority of whom would not have understood either Latin or French. J. A. Burrow highlighted the important fact that much poetry was written in local dialect thus precluding it from national circulation in its original form at least during the reign of Richard II.[102] This suggests a regionalised pattern to the poetry of the period which would seem appropriate as political crises were often local in nature. Ann Astell suggested that the poet used veiled references and codes to refer to contemporary issues and that a minority of the audience would be able to decipher them.[103] From this we are to assume that poets were writing for two audiences

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[96] McHardy, 'Liturgy and Propaganda', p. 221.

[97] Scattergood, *Politics and Poetry*, p. 18.

[98] Ibid., p. 15.

[99] Ibid., p. 23. Scattergood stated that popular songs were used to communicate with an illiterate audience whilst the court songs had an aesthetic basis.

[100] A. C. Spearing, *Criticism and Medieval Poetry* ([2nd edition] London: Edward Arnold, 1972), p. 17.

[101] Elizabeth Salter, *Fourteenth Century English Poetry* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983), p. 2. Salter stated that verse, rather than prose, was used in daily as a means of communication, from medical advice to satire. It was thus a familiar medium to the population which meant that as a means of political communication it would have been accessible.

[102] J. A. Burrow, *Ricardian Poetry* (London: Routledge and Kegan, 1971), p. 11.

[103] Ann W. Astell, *Political Allegory in Late Medieval England* (Ithaca: Cornell University

and were thus imposing a form of self-censorship on their work. It also indicated that they were very aware of the interests of their intended audience. Astell emphasised the importance of allegory as a means of communication, stating that it was 'an acknowledged vehicle of delight, instruction, and persuasion; and a powerful means for poets to define their audience by dividing them'.[104] In her article on public poetry during the reign of Richard II Anne Middleton regarded Gower's revisions of his *Confessio* as a reference to the importance of its intended audience, not just the king 'the king is not the main imagined audience, but an occasion for gathering and formulating what is on the common mind'. [105] Although the poem was originally written for Richard II it was subsequently dedicated to Henry of Lancaster, and Middleton was emphasising the fact that it was really for the public, an expression of the anxieties that were prevalent within society. Poetry was apparently moving away from the courtly/chivalric tradition and becoming more contemporaneously involved with political issues.

Scattergood stated that the scarcity of preserved political verse suggests that it was relatively unimportant as political situations were often in a state of flux.[106] This almost contradicts his statement that the polity was influenced more by verse than any other medium but perhaps it was the immediacy of political verse that led to its easy disposal thus showing that it was a particularly appropriate medium for political propaganda.[107] C. V. Wedgwood also stressed the transitory nature of political poetry: 'a poem concerned with the temporary and the topical, however wittily ingenious it may be, however tense with the moment's passion, is never so strong a candidate for immortality as one inspired by a perennial theme'.[108] Alfred Hiatt states the advantages of poetry were that it 'allowed authors to impress and persuade, to commemorate and excoriate, to lament and declaim in ways more flexible, and often more compelling, than prose'.[109]

Press, 1999), p. 6.

[104] Astell, *Political Allegory*, p. 24.

[105] Anne Middleton, 'The Idea of Public Poetry in the Reign of Richard II', *Speculum*, 53 (1978), 94-114 (p. 107).

[106] Scattergood, *Politics and Poetry*, p. 27.

[107] Above, p. 41, n. 97.

[108] C. V. Wedgwood, *Poetry and Politics under the Stuarts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1961), p. 3.

[109] Alfred Hiatt, 'Historical and Political Verse' in Julia Boffey and A. S. G. Edwards (eds), *A Companion to Fifteenth-Century English Poetry* (Cambridge: Boydell & Brewer, 2013), pp. 157-169 (p. 168).

Scattergood stated that the 'writing of political verse was dangerous for those in any way critical of the regime'.[110] The issue of censorship and suppression suggested that the message, in whatever medium, whether truthful or false had the potential to be disruptive and that it had the potential to succeed. Scattergood said that the punishment of subversive poetry proved 'that verse was thought to be a highly effective mode of propaganda'.[111] In 1377 the bishop of Bangor threatened to excommunicate the author of lampoons against John of Gaunt.[112] It is clear that poetry was an integral part of medieval life and communication and was produced both in the oral and literary form. It was not exclusive and was utilised by various groups to express political complaint or satire as well as its more usual association with leisure and romance.

Letters.

Letters were a quick means of communicating and the road network ensured the relatively easy and regular movement of post, a means of political communication available to the crown and to others involved in political debate. Christine Carpenter found that familial letters were invaluable in filling in the gaps left by official records. She also notes that there was a scarcity of complementary noble letters.[113] Family letters provided opportunities for the communication of news and are a rich source for information on political events which included examples of propaganda. They reveal the extent to which the medieval community was able to communicate with each other, not only at home, but also abroad. In late May 1482 in a letter to George Cely in Bruges, William Dalton in Calais informed him of a copy of a letter from Gloucester and Northumberland that was sent to the king and had been dispatched by messenger from England.[114]

What becomes evident is not only the importance of the material contained within the letters but the sheer quantity that were being produced and were in circulation. In the case of the Celys, correspondence was very regular, particularly between London and Calais, with often only a few days between letters. On 2 June 1480 Richard Cely the elder wrote back to George Cely in Calais, in response to his letter of 29 May.[115] If these extant letters were

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[110] Scattergood, *Politics and Poetry*, p. 21.
[111] Ibid., p. 22.
[112] Ibid., p. 21.
[113] *Stonor*, p. 31.
[114] *Cely Letters*, p. 159.
[115] Ibid.*,* pp. 79-80.

extrapolated to include all merchant families it would reveal an enormous amount of correspondence. The same could be said for the Plumptons, Pastons and Stonors if the same method was adopted for the gentry and even aristocracy. In these letters, whether mercantile, familial or legal in nature, reference was often made to national events, and thus, indirectly, there was the opportunity for propaganda to be disseminated not only at home but also abroad.

Bills.

The circulation of pamphlets and bills was another method of political expression that existed at this time. V. J. Scattergood stated that a bill was 'brief, direct and simple'.[116] News from battles, such as casualties, was conveyed through the use of bills.[117] They were regularly used to inform the public about various issues and 'offered an alternative mode of expression to the non-verbal language associated with popular politics'.[118] They were resorted to when the usual methods of communication had been perceived as being corrupted by vested interests and as such were often the voice of dissent.[119] The bills were posted in public places with the intention that they should be read first-hand or else read out loud to a crowd. In 1404 in Oxford a clerk was accused of putting up bills that 'were fixed upon the gate of Oxford castle and the doors of the churches of St. Martin and St. Peter in the Bailey'.[120] He was freed as innocent by Henry IV but whoever the true author had been, they were using a publicly posted bill to highlight the case of a certain Emma Gerard. It was perhaps the only means to seek redress when other methods had failed.

Wendy Scase made the important point that many unofficial political bills, posted up on doors and windows, were by their very nature unlikely to survive.[121] This lack of opposition evidence therefore makes it harder to assess the body of propaganda that may have been circulating at the time. In 1425 bills were used in an anti-Fleming campaign: 'the xiij day of Feverer at nyght, were caste many byllys in the cytte and in the subbarbys a-gayne the

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[116] Scattergood, *Politics and Poetry*, p. 183.
[117] Armstrong, 'Some examples', p. 432.
[118] Scase, *Bill-Casting*, p. 234.
[119] Ibid., p. 237.
[120] 'Close Rolls, Henry IV: May 1404', in *Calendar of Close Rolls, Henry IV: Volume 2, 1402-1405*, ed. A E Stamp (London, 1929), pp. 334-339. *British History Online* http://www.british-history.ac.uk/cal-close-rolls/hen4/vol2/pp334-339 [accessed 23 April 2016].
[121] Wendy Scase, '"Strange and Wonderful Bills": Bill-Casting and Political Discourse in Late Medieval England', in Rita Copeland, David Lawton and Wendy Scase (eds), *New Medieval Literatures 2* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), pp. 225-247 (p. 228).

Flemyngys, and sum were set in the byschoppe ys gate of Wynchester, and in othyr bischoppys gatys'.[122] This example reveals a popular expression of discontent by the mercantile community, not against the king and parliament, but against a minority. The merchants of London were *agitating* against the Flemings for economic reasons rather than political but the event reveals how bills were used to voice complaint. In 1450 bills were put up around London, including on the king's door at the palace of Westminster; unfortunately *Gregory's Chronicle* omits to disclose the contents.[123]

Another method was to scatter bills along the roads so that they would have been picked up and passed on from place to place.[124] The fact that so few bills survive, Wendy Scase believed, indicated the success of the measures taken by the authorities to control the posting of bills, indicative of the threat that they posed to the establishment.[125] They could be regarded as the conversion of seditious rumour onto paper thus marking a transition from verbal complaint that coincided with an increase in literacy among the lower classes. The legal moves to suppress bills suggested that the 'authorities understood that libellous texts could easily jump from literate to oral media'.[126]

Clementine Oliver's study of the pamphleteer Thomas Fovent provides a valuable contemporary insight into Ricardian politics, particularly the Merciless Parliament.[127] Fovent's work has been cited as pro-Appellant propaganda but Oliver disagrees and suggests that his work was a more complex reflection on the changing nature of political consciousness.[128] Although unlikely to be propagandist in relation to anything other than a limited audience, it provides further evidence of an interest in political discourse.

There was a wide range of propaganda available to both crown and opposition during this period. There was a medium that was appropriate at different times and for different audiences. The oration of proclamations on behalf of the state could reach a wide audience, and, likewise, rebel poetry could reach a large section of the population. The rise in literacy benefitted certain groups, such as the merchants and the lower gentry and extended the

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[122]'Gregory's Chronicle', in *Historical Collections*, p. 158.

[123] Ibid., p. 195.

[124] Scase, 'Bill-Casting', p. 238; *CCR,1447-1454*, p. 195.

[125] Ibid., p. 228.

[126] Ibid., p. 238.

[127] Clementine Oliver, *Parliament and Political Pamphleteering in Fourteenth-Century England* (Woodbridge: York Medieval Press, 2010).

[128] Oliver, *Parliament and Political Pamphleteering*, p. 194-5.

opportunities for literary propaganda as may be seen from the posting up of bills. Official histories and genealogies, although only seen by an exclusive audience would have been equally important in their ability to *integrate* or *agitate* those at the top of society, that is, those who usually determined the course of politics. Overall the methods used revealed that political attempts to explain and persuade were expressed through different media and were available to a large proportion of the late medieval polity and most importantly they reveal that there was a need for political communication.

Now that the methods available for propaganda have been identified it is possible to examine their use. In order to do so, it will be necessary to identify the propagandists and the motives that led them to produce proclamations, poems and other types of propaganda. The most obvious propagandist at any time was usually the king and his government. He was in a unique position to issue propaganda and would normally derive the most benefit. Historically the propaganda produced by the crown was well documented and preserved thus making it appear that this was the only source of propaganda. However, groups such as the rebels of 1381 and 1450 also made effective use of propaganda which has survived. During the turbulent years of the Wars of the Roses rival factions had as much necessity to produce propaganda and counter-propaganda for their own cause. As the underlying theme for the thesis has been drawn from Ellul's distinction between *agitation* and *integration* propaganda these are the criteria that will be the focus of the following case studies which will attempt to analyse who used these methods and who the intended audience was.

First, methods used for *agitation* propaganda will be examined and for a balanced perspective examples of opposition propaganda, where extant, will also be considered alongside royal propaganda.

Case Study 1: Henry V and the French Campaign.

The campaign in France was to dominate the nature and scale of Henry V's need for persuasive rhetoric as he required large amounts of financial support as well as manpower. Thus from the nature of Henry's reign one would anticipate that any proclamations would have a clear focus on the French war and in fact many served as bulletins from the 'front' to inform the domestic audience. On 28 January 1414 a truce between England and France was proclaimed.[129] In May 1415 Henry wrote to the archbishop of Canterbury asking for support

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[129] *CCR,1413-1419*, p. 108.

from the clergy in terms of manpower, 'in order to recover the heritage and rights of the crown . . . for which all christians are bound to fight if need be to the death'.[130] Henry is appealing to their duty as Christians and ensuring that he has as many troops as possible. It was not just taxes and manpower that were required for a successful expedition but the victualling of his army as seen in his request to the sheriff of Kent for 200 oxen, again using language emphasizing his desire to 'recover the heritage and rights of the crown'.[131]

Despite its geographical remoteness from the south coast, the North was still expected to contribute, both financially and with manpower, to the French expedition. A. E. Goodman's article gave a cameo of the response in the North to Henry's appeal for men to serve in France.[132] Out of the respondents it emerged that the reasons or 'excuses' for not serving were usually illness or old age and a lack of finance. However, this is not to suggest that Yorkshiremen shirked their duty. It is evident that of those who responded many had relatives already engaged in the service of the king.[133] Goodman described in the article how Robert Waterton revealed that he intended to speak to the gentlemen at York at a session of the peace to try to urge them to fight with Henry.[134] It would appear that how Waterton was meant to raise support was left up to him – there was apparently no evidence of anything officially produced by Westminster. This raises a couple of points: first, that Henry had faith in the ability of his officials to impel the local men to action and second, that Henry had no official propaganda established for this purpose. It may be that he did not think it was necessary believing that the established network of the Neville affinity would raise support on his behalf.

The excuses made were for the most part probably true or had a grain of truth in them thus suggesting that the propaganda used by Waterton was less than successful at *agitating* but were the conditions, already discussed, such that it was inevitable that any call to arms would be of limited success? However, Henry V's extensive tour of the region in 1421 successfully resulted in raising financial support for the French wars.[135] From this it may be concluded that the king's physical presence and success in France had a more favourable impact on a northern

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[130] Ibid., p. 213.
[131] Ibid., p. 217.
[132] A. E. Goodman, 'Responses to requests in Yorkshire for military service under Henry V', *NH*, XVII (1981), 240-252.
[133] Goodman, 'Responses', pp. 240-241.
[134] Ibid., pp. 241-242.
[135] Below, p. 90.

audience than Waterton's undirected attempts to raise troops for the French wars.

Despite his success at Agincourt in 1416 Henry, in raising troops on the south coast, again used anti-French propaganda to stir up support, explaining that 'great number of his enemies of France ... are at sea in no small multitude arrayed for war, going about with all their might to invade the realm'.[136] The above may be symptomatic of the beginning of a waning of support for the French wars, and this is further highlighted two years later in May 1418 in an order to the sheriff of London:

> to cause proclamations to be made, that all hired soldiers in the city and suburbs of London whatsoever estate or condition who are retained to sail to France on the present expedition shall under pain of imprisonment hasten thither with all speed, and to arrest and keep in custody until further order all whom they shall find therein more than one day after such proclamation.[137]

Henry had had to resort to threats with no appeal to any anti-French sentiment or propaganda. The description of the soldiers reveals that he was desperate for manpower suggesting that his former supporters among the gentry were no longer willing to fight. It is clear from these two proclamations that Henry's focus had changed from *agitation* to persuade the population to defend the kingdom and the dual monarchy to a threatening style redolent of a king who had lost confidence in his own rhetoric.

After Agincourt Henry instigated a more sophisticated approach to his propaganda for the continuance of the war with France through the publication of the *Gesta Henrici Quinti* in 1417. Although the author is anonymous he is believed to have been a chaplain connected with Archbishop Arundel.[138] The *Gesta* emphasized Henry's piety at the same time seeking to justify his foreign policy and proposed second French campaign. Although in a narrative form it, 'loses nothing in persuasiveness'.[139] It has been suggested that the *Gesta* was produced for both a domestic and foreign audience. Henry needed to present himself and his campaign in favourable terms to counter existing French animosity in the Council of Constance.[140] Whilst Henry was waiting for the arrival of his army at Canterbury he had noted down the previous agreements that had been reached between his father and the French and subsequently these were sent to the Emperor Sigismund to strengthen his case against the French so, 'that all

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[136] *CCR,1413-1419*, p. 364.
[137] Ibid., p. 499.
[138] *Gesta Henrici Quinti*, pp. xviii – xxiii.
[139] Ibid., p. xxiii.
[140] Ibid., p. xxv.

Christendom might know what great acts of injustice the French in their duplicity had inflicted on him'.[141] Henry had already cultivated an advantageous relationship with Sigismund which was strategically very astute.[142]

Despite his success at Agincourt Henry's French ambitions were not completed and he still needed to *agitate* an increasingly war-weary realm of the value of the campaign against the obdurate French to uphold his inheritance: 'by use of this blameless sword to exact what the French, by their blameworthy and unjust violence … [had] striven to usurp and withhold'.[143] As well as appealing to national pride there was an emphasis on God's favourable intervention and support of Henry, all devices intended to elicit popular support, which to a degree they did.[144] It is at the end of the *Gesta* that the aim of the text becomes apparent, 'in respect of the public enemies of his crown, has already triumphed twice, so may he triumph yet a third time, to the end that the two Swords, the sword of the French and the sword of England, may return to the rightful government of a single ruler'.[145]

War was one of the most important issues that a medieval king had to communicate and justify to the realm. Although Henry's success at Agincourt secured his reputation and popularity with his subjects the high cost was nevertheless a challenge to maintain. It becomes apparent from the proclamation above from 1418, that only three years later and despite the publication of the *Gesta* he was struggling to get the necessary support. The proclamations reached a large national audience who were the source of both financial and physical support whilst the *Gesta* operated at an international diplomatic level. Both audiences played an equally important role in *agitating* support for Henry's French campaign, from within and without the realm, and would have appeared to have contributed to his further success in France.

Case Study 2: The Peasants' Revolt – Opposition Agitation.

Royal propaganda had an efficient network and infrastructure with which to reach its intended audience but what means were available to the rest of the polity? In the case of the Peasants Revolt of 1381 letters were the main method used to *agitate* and revealed the rebels

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[141] Ibid., p. 17.
[142] See below, p. 68.
[143] *Gesta Henrici Quinti*, p. 15.
[144] Ibid., p. xxx.
[145] Ibid., p. 181.

as rather more educated than the average peasant. However, Justice regarded these 'letters' as broadsides intended to posted up in public places.[146] The very existence of these texts suggested Justice demonstrated that their audience, 'had a stake in the intellectual and political life of church and realm'.[147] The complaint against the imposition of the poll tax, especially in the counties of Essex and Kent, revealed 'a very substantial and perhaps increasing proportion of the English population regarded itself as effectively excluded from the king's justice'.[148]

The letter by Jakke Trewman stated: 'doth yow to understand that falsnes and gyle havith regned to long, and trewthe hat bene sette under a lokke, and falsnes regneth in everylk flokke'.[149] Of course, Richard was not ruling personally so the complaint was very much aimed towards his counsellors and Gaunt but the language used would have resonated with the commons enough to *agitate* them into action. The Kentishmen stated that they were only rebelling 'to save the king'.[150] The judiciary and lawyers were specifically targeted with the public burning of documents, an act of rebellion and *agitation*.[151] This was a rebellion that had a strong literary element in the production and circulation of letters, as Justice said there 'were so many *acts of assertive literacy*', as well as the physical destruction of papers.

Case Study 3: The earl of Warwick's letter 1470 – Opposition Agitation.

Opposition also manifested itself in those closer to the king as demonstrated in 1470 when Warwick and Clarence wrote a much publicised letter to the commons, and unusually there was direct evidence of the siting of the letter for public perusal:

> The whiche letre above wretyn divers copies were made and sette upon the standarde in Chepe, upon the stulpes on London brigge and uppon divers chirche doris in London and in other places in Englonde, before the comyng inne and landing of the seid duc and erle oute of Fraunce... In the tyme of Richard Lee, grocer, thanne beyng mair, the wiche toke downe the seide letres and wolde not suffre theime to be openly knowen ner seen to the commones.[152]

It appeared that it was not difficult for a citizen of London to see a copy of the above

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[146] Justice, *Writing and Rebellion*, p. 29.

[147] Ibid., p.30.

[148] Ormrod, *Political Life*, p.117.

[149] R. B. Dobson, *The Peasants' Revolt of 1381* ([2nd edition] Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1983), p. 32.

[150] Nigel Saul, *Richard II* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1997), p.63.

[151] Justice, *Writing and Rebellion*, p. 41.

[152] *John Vale's Book*, pp. 92, 219.

letter and it is interesting to note how vigorous the then mayor was in removing the letters as the support for Edward IV in London was unanimous. It is not known whether any other cities received copies but it shows that Warwick was aware of the importance of communicating with the capital to try and influence opinion, especially as support for Edward was so strong in London. Warwick through the text with phrases such as 'the grete hurte, enpoverisshing and the utter destruccion of you', and, 'the reaume like to be aliened and gouverned by strangers' was appealing to the common man in a populist move to persuade London to support him by emphasising the dangers of the political situation being allowed to continue as it was.[153]

Both these letters, very different in origin, were used to express the concerns of both the nobility and commons, those concerns being the poor governance of the realm. However, whilst the letter of Jakke Trewman wanted change it was within the normal boundaries of loyal complaint whilst Warwick's masqueraded as such but had a different outcome in mind, that was the deposition of Edward IV. However, they reveal that letters as method of political communication were used to reach a large broad audience and were available to the whole polity.

The following section will focus on the use of royal *integration* propaganda. For the most part this propaganda was used during moments of royal crisis when the crown itself was insecure and sought justification for its behaviour.

Integration Case Study 1: Henry IV.

Henry IV's dubious accession necessitated the need for *integration* propaganda, especially in view of the inevitable Ricardian opposition, and the early years of the reign were dominated by government propaganda to this end. Henry's seizure of the throne required a comprehensive defence and justification, both genealogically and legally, if he was to secure a smooth transition. The need for effective *integration* propaganda was therefore paramount at the start of his reign. Henry's initial problem was the legal justification for his usurpation. Before he could claim the throne Henry had to obtain Richard's renunciation of the crown, as Jenni Nuttall stated 'the creation and acceptance of Richard's supposed *demerita notoria* were pivotal to the success of the Lancastrian usurpation'.[154]

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[153] Ibid., p. 218-219.

[154] Jenni Nuttall, *The Creation of Lancastrian Kingship: Literature, Language and Politics in Late Medieval England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), p. 9.

Michael Bennett described Henry's claim as a 'fiction of Richard's abdication, Henry's own challenge for the crown, and the acceptance of his titles by the realm'.[155]

The official version of events related in the 'Record and Process' stated that Richard willingly relinquished the throne: 'I fully, willingly, directly, and totally renounce my right to the rule … of these kingdoms and dominions'. It then has Richard state: 'I confess, acknowledge, recognize … I have been and am entirely inadequate and unequal to the task of ruling'.[156] Conveniently Richard goes on to state that he would like Henry Bolingbroke to succeed him.[157] At once the document had Richard admitting he was unfit to rule and would like Henry Bolingbroke to be his heir. It was a very deft piece of Lancastrian *integration* propaganda which was circulated widely as demonstrated by its incorporation into texts like the *St. Albans Chronicle*.[158] Lucy Brown stated that Henry's claim was tenuously based on 'a mixture of unspecified hereditary right, vindicated by his military success, and the urgent need to restore England from its current parlous state'.[159] The hereditary claim of Edmund Mortimer, via the female line, was the stronger but Edmund was only a minor at the time and Henry ensured that he was kept in his custody.[160] Henry's claim was the stronger due to it being through the male line but this was not enough to justify his usurpation.[161] This weak claim left Henry in a legal quandry which he sought to rectify by stating his military success and the need to restore order, essentially all the qualities that characterised good kingship, and which Richard was perceived to be lacking in.[162]

However, the document known as the 'Manner of King Richard's Renunciation' provided a more authentic version of events.[163] This stated that in fact Richard was not so

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[155] Michael Bennett, 'Henry IV, the Royal Succession and the Crisis of 1406', in Gwilym Dodd and Douglas Biggs (eds), *The Reign of Henry IV: Rebellion and Survival, 1403-1413* (Woodbridge: York Medieval Press publication in association with Boydell Press, 2008), pp. 9-27 (p. 14).

[156] *Chronicles of the Revolution*, pp. 168-172.

[157] Ibid., p. 171.

[158] Michael Bennett, *Richard II and the Revolution of 1399* (Stroud: Sutton, 2006), p. 7.

[159] Lucy Brown, 'Continuity and Change in the Parliamentary Justifications of the Fifteenth-Century Usurpations', in Linda Clark (ed.), *Conflicts, Consequences and the Crown in the late Middle Ages*, The Fifteenth Century VII (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2007), pp. 157-173 (p. 165).

[160] Brown, 'Continuity and Change', p. 164.

[161] Ibid., pp. 164-5.

[162] Ibid., p. 165.

[163] See 'Henry IV: October 1399', in *Parliament Rolls of Medieval England*, ed. Chris Given-Wilson, Paul Brand, Seymour Phillips, Mark Ormrod, Geoffrey Martin, Anne Curry and

acquiescent in his desire to resign and appears to be an independent version of events by an eye witness.[164] From the 'Manner' it was evident how much the real events were doctored to produce a piece of propaganda that appeared plausible and totally justified Henry's actions. When Richard was asked whether he had considered signing the resignation document produced by Bolingbroke's supporters he replied 'that he would not do it under any circumstances; and he was greatly incensed'.[165] This should be compared with the 'Record and Process' where it is stated that Richard was willing to 'fully, willingly, directly, and totally renounce my right to the rule, governance and administration of these kingdoms'.[166] Both these represent opposing views of the event, each expressing their own bias, and somewhere between the two the more accurate picture of the deposition lies. Richard's personality was hard to discern with any certainty so it is possible that that he may have acquiesced but then his style of kingship was quite contrary and he could have resisted relinquishing the throne so easily.[167]

The 'Record and Process' was incorporated into many contemporary manuscripts in order to legitimize the usurpation and to further establish the Lancastrian dynasty textually.[168] The dissemination of this text was a necessary component in what had been a comprehensive programme of *integration* propaganda by Henry which also employed the visual genre.[169]

Integration Case Study 2: Richard III.

As it became apparent to Richard III that the Woodville faction held sway his propaganda became more extreme in his efforts to legitimize his claim to the throne. He fabricated a story that Edward IV had been illegitimate and therefore his offspring were not legitimate heirs to the crown. There are different versions of the story recorded, some stating that Edward himself was a bastard whilst the other, the pre-contract story, stated that his

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Rosemary Horrox (Woodbridge, 2005), *British History Online* http://www.british-history.ac.uk/no-series/parliament-rolls-medieval/october-1399 [accessed 21 March 2016]; G. O. Sayles, 'The deposition of Richard II: three Lancastrian narratives', *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research*, 54 (1981), 257-70; C. Given-Wilson, 'The Manner of King Richard's renunciation: A "Lancastrian Narrative"?', *English Historical Review*, 108 (1993), 365-370.

[164] Given-Wilson, 'Manner', p. 369.

[165] *Chronicles of the Revolution*, pp. 162-7 (p. 163).

[166] Ibid., pp. 170-1.

[167] For contrasting views on Richard's personality see below, pp.110-116.

[168] Nuttall, *Creation*, p. 17.

[169] This will be discussed in Chapter II.

children were illegitimate.[170]

The *Crowland Chronicle* wrote of the story circulated, 'contained in a certain parchment roll, that King Edward's sons were bastards, by submitting that he had been precontracted to a certain Lady Eleanor Boteler'. The roll was rumoured to have originated in the North although it was realized that Richard was at the root of it.[171] It was also recorded in the Parliament Roll: 'also, it clearly appears and follows that all the issue and children of the said King Edward are bastards, and unable to inherit or claim anything by inheritance, by the law and custom of England'.[172] This left the way clear for Richard to be recognized as the real heir to the throne: 'moreover, we consider how you are the undoubted son and heir of Richard, late duke of York, the true inheritor of the said crown and royal dignity, and by right king of England by way of inheritance'.[173]

Dominic Mancini made it clear what Richard's true intentions were: 'since he so corrupted preachers of the divine word, that in their sermons to the people they did not blush to say ... that the progeny of king Edward should be instantly eradicated, for neither had he been a legitimate king nor could his issue be so'.[174] Mancini was referring to Richard's use of government sponsored preaching when in June 1483 'at St. Pauls Cross ... with a huge audience ... was declared by Dr Ralph Shaw ... that the children of King Edward were not right inheritors of the crown'.[175] Vitellius A XVI records the sermon, 'at powles crosse, that kyng Edwarde's children were not Ryghtfull Enheritours unto the Crownr, but that the Duke of Glowcetir's title was bettir than thers'.[176]

This allegation was repeated in a speech given by the Duke of Buckingham to an audience of the mayor and citizens of London and reiterated on the following day to an

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[170] Mancini, pp. 94-97. Mancini said that Edward 'was conceived in adultery' and that his marriage to Elizabeth Woodville was illegal as he 'was legally contracted to another wife'.
[171] *Crowland*, p. 161.
[172] 'Richard III: January 1484', in *Parliament Rolls of Medieval England*, ed. Chris Given-Wilson, Paul Brand, Seymour Phillips, Mark Ormrod, Geoffrey Martin, Anne Curry and Rosemary Horrox (Woodbridge, 2005), *British History Online* http://www.british-history.ac.uk/no-series/parliament-rolls-medieval/january-1484 [accessed 4 May 2016].
[173] 'Richard III: January 1484', in *Parliament Rolls of Medieval England*, ed. Chris Given-Wilson, Paul Brand, Seymour Phillips, Mark Ormrod, Geoffrey Martin, Anne Curry and Rosemary Horrox (Woodbridge, 2005), *British History Online* http://www.british-history.ac.uk/no-series/parliament-rolls-medieval/january-1484 [accessed 4 May 2016].
[174] Mancini, p. 95.
[175] Dockray, *Richard III*, p. 80.
[176] *Chronicles of London*, p. 190.

audience of lords and gentry.[177] It appears that Richard was highly organized in ensuring that as many people as possible heard his claim. The audience at St. Paul's would have been large and diverse and the use of Shaw would have added gravitas to the event.

The speeches made by Buckingham were designed to persuade the influential London audience and the lords. This could be described as *pre-integration* propaganda as Richard had not yet declared his true intent and it was not *agitation* propaganda as Richard would certainly not have welcomed the influence of external factors in a situation which he was so skillfully manipulating by himself. His confidence or naivety was such that no material evidence was produced to further substantiate either version of the story.[178] Richard was relying on the verbal communication of a respected member of the elite and a Cambridge doctor of theology to do his persuading for him. In the context of having to communicate with a London audience it was probably an astute move by Richard who was not popular with a southern audience. Despite attracting a large audience at St. Pauls Cross the death of the young princes meant that Richard's propagandist sermon served no purpose but rather confirmed, in contemporary eyes, his evil intentions.

Conclusion.

In this chapter the intention was to identify, based on Ellul's idea of *integration* and *agitation*, examples of the methods available to the crown and late medieval polity to express their political grievances and opinions. One of the most important criteria that enabled this political 'conversation' was the existence of an efficient communications network that allowed information, whether political, social or economic to circulate. The prodigious number of familial letters and their contents confirm this flow, certainly amongst the gentry and mercantile communities.

The chief communicator was naturally the crown and government through proclamations, letters, sermons or more esoteric works such as 'official histories'. Noble opposition was expressed through similar methods whilst the general polity had recourse to poetry, songs and bills. Although propaganda of an *agitational* style, is often associated with crises, and this is not in doubt, it also had a persuasive role in *integration*, particularly after a crisis.

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[177] Charles Ross, *Richard III* (London: Eyre Methuen, 1988), p. 88.
[178] Ross stated that pre-contract story would not 'stand up to serious scrutiny', p. 90.

The case studies, particularly for agitation sources show that there was no barrier to expressing complaint, loyal or other, and that the means of communication were similar across the social groups. Reaching as large an audience as possible was the main purpose for all involved and from the extant records this appears to have been successful, confirming that communication methods and public arenas were efficient and that there existed a politically involved population.

The various methods employed, often subtle or specific, meant that they could influence different audiences from proclamations used in the market square to a more exclusive audience for a genealogy. This was a period, when due to a more informed polity combined with political uncertainty there was the opportunity and necessity for propaganda to be employed, often extensively.

CHAPTER II

Visual Propaganda: Uses and Interpretation.

'it is as well to remember that public attitudes were influenced a great deal more easily by visual than by written media'.[1]

It is the contention of this thesis that the use of visual propaganda in the later middle ages was extensive and laid the basis for the Tudors to take it to a higher level of sophistication. In this chapter visual media will be examined in terms of their propensity to *agitate* or *integrate*, either the whole population or certain influential elements. The examples used will vary from livery and badges to effigies, architecture and executions. Despite the emphasis usually being focussed on the king and the associated representation of kingship this does not portray the full extent of visual propaganda at this time. The need and indeed ability to communicate with members of the public was not the sole prerogative of the monarch; other groups were also adept at communicating through visual representation.

In the early medieval period when literacy levels were low the need to communicate to the public at large had to be met by other methods and the visual genre was one such method. An inability to read or write did not mean an inability to understand other symbols or images. The Franciscan St. Bonaventure (d.1274) wrote of the use of images for religious instruction: 'they were introduced on account of the transitory nature of memory, because those things which are only heard fall into oblivion more easily than those things which are seen'.[2] This statement was as readily applicable to politics as religion. Generations had become skilful at interpreting visual cues and, even with an increase in literacy in late medieval England, visual

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[1] W. M. Ormrod, 'The Domestic Response to the Hundred Years War', in Anne Curry and Michael Hughes (eds), *Arms, Armies and Fortifications in the Hundred Years War* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1994), pp. 83-101 (pp. 97-8).

[2] Paul Binski, *Medieval Craftsmen; Painters* (London: British Museum Press, 1991), p. 35.

genres were still an important means of communication. In fact, combined with the written word, large-scale communication was becoming increasingly refined.[3]

In identifying the shortcomings of many literary sources, historians looked towards the visual arts as a less corrupted source. Francis Haskell, however, warned against too much reliance on this approach as 'many investigations ... have sought to demonstrate that even images formerly assumed to depict only what could have been seen by an innocent eye ... were in fact the products of conscious or unconscious manipulation'.[4]

Haskell was highlighting the problem of interpreting works of art as historical evidence as seen through Montfaucon's eighteenth-century study of the Bayeux tapestry:

> Acute though Montfaucon's interpretations often were, it never occurred to him that the images he was trying to interpret might - just as easily as written records, have been manufactured as political propaganda. Because he was convinced that the images had been made at the same time as the events they depicted had taken place, he was certain that the record they gave of those events must be true.[5]

Montfaucon was saying that contemporaneous sources were not subject to propaganda, inferring therefore, in the case of the visual genre, propaganda was the result of hindsight. Haskell was acknowledging the potential presence of propaganda and that art was regarded as an effective medium. Evelyn Welch stated that political overtones were expressed through a variety of methods including poetry, sculpture, painting or heraldry.[6] Welch conceded that it was the more everyday sights that were used to greater effect: 'contemporary remarks suggest that for the majority of citizens simpler and more ubiquitous objects, such as coins, seals, pennants, banners, and coats of arms, acted as the most overt expression of political authority'.[7] The above views convey, first, the argument that art was an important method of communication; second, that it was open to manipulation by both contemporaries and later interpretation by historians. Richard Marks wondered whether monumental art had an effect

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[3] Maurice Keen, 'Introduction', in Peter Coss and Maurice Keen (eds), *Heraldry, Pageantry and Social Display in Medieval England* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2002), p. 8.

[4] Francis Haskell, *History and its Images* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), p. 5.

[5] Haskell, *History*, p. 142.

[6] Evelyn Welch, *Art and Society in Italy 1350-1500* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 211.

[7] Welch, *Art*, p. 215

on public opinion as it is hard to assess, however, he concluded that it did 'or else the works…would not have been commissioned'.[8]

By contrast, Sidney Anglo[9] and Theodore Rabb,[10] in examining the Tudor period and the Renaissance respectively, argued that too much had been read into the symbolism of the past using the methodology of the twentieth century and thus signs had been incorrectly interpreted as portentous when in contemporary eyes they were innocent. Rabb stated 'we need to recognize that marvellous manipulations of images and forms may offer insights into the genius of an artist, a scholar, or a patron, but not into the workings of political propaganda'.[11] Rabb believed that the visual arts were just that, art to be enjoyed and with no political overtones.

More recently John Watts has argued that both visual and verbal language reinforced the reality that they depicted.[12] Paul Binski felt that we can uncover 'accounts of the production of medieval art, but not its reception'.[13] There is no question, as these debates would suggest, that there are significant challenges arising from the problems and possible multiple readings of visual evidence. Its very complexity lies behind the range of perspectives historians have taken, some in denying the political relevance of the messages which might have been intentionally included within it and read from it, and others in claiming a simpler and straightforward manner of production and reception. In this chapter we will be sensitive to the limitations of the sources, but in particular be aware of the issue of reception, for it is in the eye of the beholder that this aspect of late medieval political communication must be judged.

It is possible to gauge the reception of some forms of medieval art from comments in contemporary chronicles particularly with reference to items such as badges. We know that the reception of badges caused such a reaction that parliament was forced to seek legislation on

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[8] Richard Marks, *Studies in the Art and Imagery of the Middle Ages* (London: Pindar Press, 2012), p. 121.

[9] Sidney Anglo, *Images of Tudor Kingship* (Guildford: Seaby, 1992).

[10] Theodore K. Rabb, 'Play, not politics', *Times Literary Supplement*, 10 November 1995, 18-20.

[11] Rabb, 'Play, not politics', p. 20.

[12] John Watts, 'Looking for the State in Later Medieval England', in Coss & Keen (eds), *Heraldry, Pageantry*, pp. 243-267 (pp. 244-5).

[13] Paul Binski, 'Hierarchies and Orders in English Royal Images of power', in Jeffrey Denton (ed.), *Orders and Hierarchies in Late Medieval and Renaissance Europe* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1999), pp. 74-93 (p.75).

the matter.[14] Other items, often clothing, also had inherent meanings that were often understood by the public. In a book review on textiles during the 1930's and 40's Dr Anna Jackson stated that 'cloth ... has a great capacity for communication' and 'is by its very nature, one of the most visible of the arts'.[15] In 1444 the the *Great Chronicle* made reference to the use of livery 'in those dayes and long afftyr every lordys lyvery and servauntys were knowyn by the conysaunce brawderid upon the sleve'.[16] The chronicle suggests that this was a well recognised method for displaying livery and identifying the family associated with the badge. The transmission of information via clothing, including badges, was obviously an established and recognisable method of communication.

The evidence to be examined here will confirm the view of Haskell and Welch that politics and propaganda were expressed through the visual arts. For Rabb and Anglo to dismiss the importance of art as a conduit for political messages is misplaced as the primary sources will subsequently reveal the extent to which the visual genre played a role in influencing the politics of the late medieval period.

Perhaps what was less evident after the reception was the subsequent interpretation of these visual cues. Watts suggested that we need to examine the possibility of misinterpretation of symbols or their unintended impact.[17] Therefore, in order to try and assimilate some impression of the influence of the visual image it may be beneficial to use twenty-first century definitions as a benchmark for investigation. As discussed in the opening chapter the definition of propaganda as delineated by Ellul will be used as the basis of the analysis. Ellul's requirement that education is a prerequisite for propaganda to take place needs clarifying further for the visual genre.[18] If by education we mean the ability to recognise visual symbols, which of course is what literacy is, then the medieval population did have a basic knowledge that they would have gained through religious wall paintings in church. The medieval population was able to assimilate knowledge from various visual sources which could also lead them to be manipulated via the visual medium. A rather unusual letter from the Armburgh

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[14] Nigel Saul, 'The Commons and the Abolition of Badges', *Parliamentary History*, 9 (1990), 302-315.

[15] Dr Anna Jackson reviewing Jacqueline Atkins, *Wearing Propaganda: Textiles on the Home Front in Japan, Britain and the United States 1931-1945* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005).URL:http://www.history.ac.uk/reviews/review/548 accessed 15 June, 2012.

[16] *Great Chronicle*, pp. 177-178.

[17] Watts, 'Looking for the State', p. 245.

[18] Above, p. 26, n. 19.

papers illustrates the use of visual images from the medieval bestiary. Joan Armburgh was writing to John Horell in 1429/30 condemning him for betraying her family and describing him as a 'kukkowysbird devouryng the heysogge' indicating that both writer and recipient were aware and understood the nature of visual associations from the bestiary and were therefore cognisant with visual metaphors.[19]

For the purposes of this thesis the examination of the presence and extent of visual propaganda has been divided into *art* and *physical.* The former is represented through heraldry, architecture, and paintings, expressed in its many forms - essentially the conventional image of visual propaganda. *Art* is also found in combination with the literary genre, for example in the case of genealogies. *Art*, in many forms, has a certain permanence about it which was suited to *integration* propaganda, often through commemoration found in architecture and funerary monuments. This was used to establish a dynastic precedent in the public's mind. Whereas *physical* propaganda was of a more transitory nature and more suited to short-term political necessity. *Physical* propaganda can be regarded as being manifested through events such as; public executions, processions, military displays, coronations and funerals, often produced for specific occasions.

Through the definitions outlined above it should be possible first, to determine the presence of a political aim within the various visual genres and second, to try and identify the motives behind their use, and finally to try and assess any impact upon the medieval audience at both home and abroad. First, the *art* genre will be examined, starting with the role of heraldry.

Art.

Heraldry.

Heraldry was integral to the visual world of late medieval England and as such had accrued a political as well as historical significance. Since the beginning of the thirteenth century the art of heraldry had developed into a pictorial language that was universally recognisable. This system of armorial bearings had been fully established by the fourteenth century and had become gradually integrated into the decorative arts. Heraldic decoration could

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[19] *The Armburgh Papers: The Brokholes Inheritance in Warwickshire, Hertfordshire and Essex c. 1417– c.1453*, ed. Christine Carpenter (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1998), p. 120.

be found on buildings, ships, horse harnesses, clothing and domestic plate amongst other places. The Hundred Years War provided a fertile environment in which politics and culture, from badges to coronations, came together in a powerful combination.[20] During Edward III's reign in 1346 the citizens of Honfleur were sent a sheep that had the cross of St. George painted on its back whilst the fleur-de-lis was displayed on its rear.[21] A century later the English were still trying to impress their rule over the French and in 1435 the Parisians were forced to wear the St. George cross.

The armorial badge could be grouped into four distinct types. First, *personal* which was usually to be found on the clothing, furnishings and jewellery of an individual and included royal or noble badges. Second, *livery* which was worn by retainers and armies on uniforms and adorned flags. Third, *official* which were associated with a specific household or corporate office, such as the judiciary. Finally, *corporate* which was the mark of the guilds or orders of chivalry.[22] As livery became more widespread and due to the limited palette of dyes available to clothiers a further distinguishing mark became necessary to identify various retainers, the badge. [23] Their usage also increased as armorial bearings became more complex and thus harder to identify immediately.[24] In referring to heraldry Adrian Ailes emphasised its role 'in the war to win hearts and minds' for a largely illiterate population.[25] As Ailes argued, it was during the reign of Richard II that both the badge and livery collar entered the political arena.[26]

The actual choice of a badge developed over many years drawing on various influences. David Starkey defined the requisite qualities of the badge, 'to fulfil its function the badge had to be, of necessity, a simple, easily remembered and recognisable emblem'.[27] Both Starkey and Saul regarded the badge not only as a symbol of service but also as a visual manifestation of bastard feudalism.[28] Michael Michael saw the use of badges as political as there must have

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[20] Adrian Ailes, 'Heraldry in Medieval England: Symbols of Politics and Propaganda', in Coss & Keen (eds), *Heraldry, Pageantry*, pp. 83-104 (p. 94).

[21] Ailes, 'Heraldry', p. 92.

[22] Stephen Friar (ed.), *A New Dictionary of Heraldry* (London: Alphabooks, 1987), p. 41.

[23] Saul, 'Commons', p. 307.

[24] John Cherry, *Medieval Decorative Art* (London: British Museum Press, 1991), p. 32.

[25] Ailes, 'Heraldry', p. 83.

[26] Ibid., p. 95.

[27] David Starkey, 'Ightham Mote: Politics and Architecture in Early Tudor England', *Archaeologia*, CVII (1982), 153-161 (p. 154).

[28] Starkey, 'Ightham Mote', p. 158; Nigel Saul, 'Commons', p. 307.

been a consensus of opinion as to the significance of the gesture, that is, it was universally recognised as having more than a purely familial meaning.[29]

The initial design of the badge was diverse with some commemorating events such as Henry VII's crown in a hawthorn bush or were visual puns such as the bray of Sir Reginald Bray.[30] The adoption of the white boar by Richard III appeared to be an unusual choice as traditionally it was regarded as a king whom god had transformed into that shape for his sins, who was unreconciled and unreconcilable, his temper rancorous, his moods inhumane but his royal intelligence undimmed by his beast vision. However, there were other associations with the boar that may have led Richard to use it. It has often been thought that it was a pun on the Latin for the city of York, *Eboracum*, and reflected his fondness for his northern capital. Another suggestion has been the connection to St. Anthony, whose badge was the wild boar who had acted as his protector whilst he was in the wilderness.[31] Richard was so associated with the boar that the *Crowland Chronicle* said 'in the year 1485 on the 22nd day of August the tusks of the boar were blunted and the red rose, the avenger of the white, shines upon us'.[32]

A good indicator of the importance of the badge is to examine the scale of their production and distribution. The large-scale production of badges for the pilgrim trade had been in existence for years and thus manufacture of livery badges would have been straightforward. G. L. Harriss stated that in times of unrest the production of badges was a cheaper alternative to the distribution of fees.[33]

At certain critical times Richard II distributed livery badges for example, in 1387 he distributed silver gilt crowns in an attempt to gain the support of the recipients in his struggle against the Appellants. Shelagh Mitchell noted that Richard's next distribution of livery badges

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[29] Michael, Michael, 'The little land of England is preferred before the great kingdom of France: the quartering of the royal arms by Edward III', in David Buckton & T. A. Heslop (eds), *Studies in Medieval Art and Architecture, presented to Peter Lasko*, (Far Thrupp: A. Sutton (for) the Trustees of the British Museum, 1994), pp. 113-26 (p. 113).

[30] Starkey, 'Ightham Mote', p. 154.

[31] A. J. Pollard, *Richard III and the Princes in the Tower* (Godalming: Bramley Books, 1997), pp. 86- 89; Philippa Langley and Michael Jones, *The King's Grave: The Search for Richard III* (London: John Murray, 2013), pp. 228-229.

[32] *Crowland*, pp. 184-185. It is interesting to note that this is one of the earliest records that refers to the red and white roses as synonymous with the Yorkist and Lancastrian houses respectively.

[33] G. L. Harriss, 'The King and his subjects', in R. Horrox (ed.), *Fifteenth Century Attitudes: Perceptions of Society in Late Medieval England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 13-28 (p. 21).

took place at the Smithfield tournament in 1390.[34] This was at a time when, although Richard had defeated the Appellants, he still needed to reassert his authority and build up support and rather than the silver gilt crowns of 1387 Richard chose the white hart, his personal badge, wearing a crown and chain about its neck as his badge.[35] The author of *Mum and the Sothsegger* complained about Richard's extensive use of the livery by his retainers: 'þat swarmed so thikke' and further stated that it made him unpopular:

> So, trouthe to tell/ as toune-men said,
> For on þat ȝe merkyd/ ȝe myssed ten schore
> Of homeliche hertis/ þat þe harme hente.[36]

The author was stating that for every hart badge that was issued, Richard lost ten score of the hearts of the people. This comment reflected the negative impact that his affinity was having on his popularity, through both the use of a visual device combined with the physical oppression associated with those who wore the device. This was despite an attempt by the Commons who had earlier in his reign sought to bring the giving of livery under control.[37]

Perhaps one of the most openly propagandist use of a badge during the reign of Henry IV was the use of Richard II's hart to *agitate* against the king. In November 1402 Maud de Vere, countess of Oxford was accused of distributing badges in support of Richard II: 'harts that were fashioned, for which the countess set down as pledge to Neil Goldsmith a censer of silver-gilt to pay for the harts that were of king Richard's livery'.[38] Maud must have believed in the efficacy of such badges to make such a financial commitment confirming that this was an effective means of communication. The badge as a focus for *agitation* against Henry IV may be seen by Henry Percy's adoption of the white hart of Richard II in 1403 at Lichfield, when 'Ser Henry Percye and all his men were arayed in the livery of the hertis, the whiche

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[34] Shelagh Mitchell, 'Richard II and the Broomcod Collar: New evidence from the Issue Rolls', in C. Given-Wilson (ed.), *Fourteenth Century England II* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2002), pp. 171-80 (p. 173).

[35] *Historia vitae et regni Ricardi Secundi*, ed. Geo. B. Stow (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1977), p. 32.

[36] *Mum and the Sothsegger*, ed. Mabel Day and Robert Steele, EETS, OS, 199 (1936), pp. 7, 8, 20-1, 41-43.

[37] For a discussion on the legislation connected with livery see below, pp. 69-70.

[38] *Select Cases in the Court of King's Bench under Richard II, Henry IV and Henry V*, Selden Society, VII ,88 (1971), p. 151.

wasse kynge Richardes livery'.[39] However, the use of the dead king's badge was unsuccessful in raising the support that Percy had hoped for as it had for Maud. This may have been indicative of the lack of support for Richard suggesting that the population were aware that he was dead and that they had no complaints about Henry's rule.

The quantity of badges found in London suggests that the distribution of badges was at its height during the second half of the fifteenth century coinciding with the political upheaval associated with the Wars of the Roses.[40] In 1454 the Duke of Buckingham had 2,000 badges of his badge made in order to quickly muster a force.[41] In 1483 Richard III ordered 13,000 livery badges bearing the white boar to be distributed whilst he travelled north.[42] The Hundred Years War also saw large scale badge production as in 1411 the Parisians hastily adopted the Burgundian badge and within a fortnight 100,000 of these badges had been produced.[43] The quantities involved reveal how important it was to have a large retinue and that the use of the badge was vital to *agitation* propaganda.

In 1377 Walsingham revealed the unpopularity of association with John of Gaunt: 'they tore from their necks the chains which they had received from the duke and hid them in their sleeves or gauntlets'. Walsingham was scathing in his view of Gaunt's adherents saying that they believed that 'they could gain riches before heaven and earth'.[44] This example provides evidence of the contemporary perception of Gaunt and revealed that his badge was widely recognised and a powerful political symbol.

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[39] *An English Chronicle, 1377-1461: Edited from Aberystwyth, National Library of Wales MS 21068 and Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Lyell 34*, ed. William Marx (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2003), p. 33.

[40] Brian Spencer, *Pilgrim Souvenirs & Secular Badges* (London: The Stationery Office, 1998), p. 278.

[41] Saul, 'Commons', p. 309.

[42] Harriss, 'King and his subjects', p. 21. Noble, in his *History of the College of Arms*, stated that Richard III had 8,000 cognizances made, wrought upon fustian, he supposes in silver thread which cost £20 per thousand - a not inconsiderable sum; cited in *Original Letters Illustrative of English History*, third series, 1, ed. H. Ellis (London: Richard Bentley, 1846), p. 113.

[43] Spencer, *Pilgrim Souvenirs*, pp. 279-280.

[44] *St. Albans*, p. 93. Again in 1377 Walsingham comments on the angry reaction of a crowd when they saw a follower of the unpopular John of Gaunt: 'he was soon pulled from his horse by the people and lost the badge of his lord'. These two mentions of the badges of Gaunt emphasise how powerful they were at causing a reaction – negative in this instance.

The importance of being correctly identified was paramount during the crisis years of 1469-71, when the wearing of the wrong badge may have been literally fatal as Commines reported upon the news of the flight of Edward IV from England 'they told me at this dinner that after the news had arrived from England, within less than a quarter of an hour everyone was wearing that livery: 'of the ragged staff''.[45] The availability of the Warwick livery would appear to be an example of literary hyperbole but if true suggests a sophisticated level of political acumen and organisation. In 1470 upon his arrival at Ravenspur, Edward IV tried to prove his allegiance to Prince Edward as he 'wered ane estryche feder, Prynce Edwarde's lyvery'.[46] By wearing Prince Edward's livery Edward was attempting to use *integration* propaganda in order not look like a threat.

These examples confirm that badges were an important method of political communication and had been elevated from mere chivalric tradition to a recognised method of propaganda. However, as with any mode of communication it could be subject to misinterpretation. The extensive use of badges, and their variety, inevitably led to confusion on occasion. This could have serious political implications, particularly in a battle scenario as Elizabeth Danbury highlighted:

> On the morning immediately preceding the battle of Poitiers, Sir John Chandos rode out to reconnoitre the French positions, and Marshal Jean de Clermont those of the English. Each noticed that the other bore the same device as himself, 'une bleue dame ouvree de broudre ou ray d'un soleil'.[47]

The resultant argument thus confirming the importance of the badge and the fact that despite becoming more complex in design they were still open to be misunderstood. Warkworth provided another example of the problem of mistaken identity at the Battle of Barnet as 'the Erle of Oxenfordes men hadde uppon them ther lordes lyvery, both before and behynde, which was a sterre withe stremys, wiche [was] myche lyke kynge Edwardes lyvery, the sunne with stremys'.[48] This led to the Earl of Warwick's men fighting against the Earl of

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[45] *Philippe De Commynes Memoirs: The Reign of Louis XI 1461–83*, trans. Michael Jones (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1972), p. 192.
[46] Warkworth, p. 14.
[47] 'Oeuvres de Froissart', ed. Kervyn de Lettenhove & A. Scheler (Brussels, 1867-1877), V, pp. 416-19 cited in Elizabeth Danbury, 'English and French Artistic Propaganda during the period of the Hundred Years War: Some Evidence from Royal Charters', in C. Allmand (ed.), *Power, Culture and Religion in France, c.1350-c.1550* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press,1989), pp. 75-97 (p. 95).
[48] Warkworth, p. 16.

Oxford's men rather than King Edward's which led to Edward's subsequent victory. This incident revealed how powerful and recognisable the badge was, particularly during the heat of battle but conversely it also reveals the impact that misinterpretation could have on the propagandist use of visual media.

Another vestige of armorial device on a grander scale was the livery collar which, like a badge, was worn as a sign of adherence to a particular individual or family. Although these were distributed to loyal supporters they were not mass produced and distributed like badges to all retainers as a means of identification. They were more likely to be worn on ceremonial occasions than on the battlefield and were often reproduced on effigies as an indication of political allegiance. There are some excellent examples to be found in All Saints church, Harewood. On the tomb of Sir Richard Redman (died circa 1426) he is depicted wearing the collar of the alternate knots and ribbon and SS's, which was the livery of the House of Lancaster. He had been made speaker in 1415 as he had assisted in the mobilisation of the army which sailed to France with Henry V. On a later tomb of 1461, Sir William Gascoigne is wearing the Yorkist livery of a collar of suns and roses and has a lion of March pendant. Gascoigne had been with the Lancastrians in the Wars of the Roses but Edward IV pardoned him in 1461, hence the Yorkist collar.[49] In Rougham, Norfolk the effigy of Sir William Yelverton, Justice of the King's Bench, circa 1470, shows him wearing a Yorkist collar.[50] In his study of the Cobham brasses Nigel Saul emphasised the importance of these funerary forms in terms of their wider importance: 'brasses were crucial to the strategies of legitimation by which families drew attention to their status'.[51] These examples show how funerary art had the possibility to *integrate* the viewer to support the regime represented, if it was still in power, and that they were used throughout the country.

There is evidence that Richard II wore the Lancastrian SS collar belonging to his uncle John of Gaunt.[52] It was allegedly worn as a token of affection by Richard upon Gaunt's return from Spain in 1389. Pictorial and literary evidence had Richard wearing not only his own livery

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[49] Pauline Routh & Richard Knowles, 'The Medieval Monuments', in *All Saints' Church Harewood, West Yorkshire* (London: The Redundant Churches Fund, 1992). Unpaginated.
[50] Pauline E. Routh, *Medieval Effigial Alabaster Tombs in Yorkshire* (Ipswich: Boydell Press, 1976), p. 36.
[51] Nigel Saul, *Death, Art and Memory in Medieval England: The Cobham Family and their Monuments, 1300-1500* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 6.
[52] Dillian Gordon, *Making and Meaning: The Wilton Diptych* (London: National Gallery Publications, 1993), p. 51.

but that of two of the most powerful men within his circle, that is, the SS collar of Gaunt and the broomcod of Charles VI. Richard appeared to be courting the political support of two strategically important characters, on whose goodwill his reign relied.

One of Henry V's greatest political coups was his courtship of the Emperor Sigismund in an attempt to gain more extensive support for his French campaign. He wined and dined Sigismund lavishly but more importantly he made Sigismund a knight of the Garter and gave him a Lancastrian SS collar. In 1417 when Sigismund returned to Constance it was reported that he wore the robes of the Order of the Garter and the collar at high mass.[53] The visual implication of Sigismund wearing the collar of the king of England must have had an effect on French morale. The wearing of the SS collar was also to be found in other parts of the continent, including Mantua when in 1436 Henry VI allowed Gianfresco Gonzaga 'to present fifty SS collars' to his own countrymen.[54] This was a visual expression of mutual support for the Lancastrian regime and reinforced the relationship between Henry, Gianfresco and the Emperor Sigismund.

Although fewer were produced than badges, livery collars had an important role amongst the more influential members of society. As may be seen from the example of Sigismund, the collar reached an international audience at a time when English political influence was looking towards re-asserting itself in France. Henry V must have realised that Sigismund would wear it in public and the propagandist effect that it would on the French.

The visual abuse of armorial devices was used as a statement of political dissatisfaction as in 1377 when angry Londoners put John of Gaunt's arms upside down on the doors of Westminster Hall as a sign of disrespect.[55] Usk recorded an interesting example of the removal of the arms of Roger Walden by Arundel upon his return to Canterbury: 'while those of the said Roger-once they had been taken down…I saw stuffed ignominiously under benches, or hurled from windows by menials and thrown out'.[56] The replacement of the armorial decoration emphasised the extent to which it was used but also that it had immense personal and visual significance. In August 1450 many soldiers who had returned from war in France penniless blamed their hardship on Suffolk and Say and expressed their resentment in the following way

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[53] C. Allmand, *Henry V* ([New edition] New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1997), p. 245.
[54] David Starkey, 'Henry VI's Old Blue Gown', *The Court Historian*, 4 (1999), 1-28 (p. 5).
[55] Ailes, 'Heraldry', p.103.
[56] *Usk*, p. 79. Walden had likewise removed Arundel's arms previously.

according to *Bale's Chronicle* 'the sowdeours yeden aboute in divers places and wher that they sygh ony armes either of the duk of Suffolk or lord say they pulled hem down and despoilled them'.[57]

This reinforced the idea that arms were recognised easily and that the destruction of their arms was a very emotive visual response. The population would have understood the insult that was being directed at these two lords. Bale recorded another example of arms being taken down by political rivals in 1450, in this case those of the Duke of York:

> Item the ffriday the xxx of Octobr wer drawe down in divers places of the citie and aboute in the subarbes the armes of the seid duk of york a bage of the ffetherlok and the kings armes set up. Item upon all halowen eve the seid armes of the duk of york wer set up agein.[58]

The repeated removal and reinstatement of the arms made it apparent that this visual genre was taken seriously by the authorities as a means of political communication, and in this case as *agitation* propaganda.

The discussion so far has shown that badges were worn and distributed in large numbers by both the king and the nobility and that this had political implications. It was towards the end of the fourteenth century that the giving of badges in particular aroused concern and the Commons began to try to introduce legislation. R. L. Storey stated that it was the increase in unrest and disorder that most concerned the Commons.[59]

There was a fear that the large-scale distribution of badges could be construed to be taking away allegiance from the king and transferring it to another figure. In 1388 the Commons called for the total ban on the giving of badges including those of the king. Richard II was happy to acquiesce to this request by the Commons but the lords refused and the issue was deferred to the next parliament.[60] In May 1390 Richard published an ordinance that was intended to control the distribution of liveries as the Commons were becoming vociferous at

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[57] 'Bale's Chronicle', in *Six Town Chronicles of England*, ed. Ralph Flenley (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1911), p. 134.

[58] Ibid., p. 136.

[59] R. L. Storey, 'Liveries and Commissions of the Peace 1388-90', in F. R. H. Boulay and Caroline Barron (eds), *The Reign of Richard II: Essays in Honour of May McKisack* (London: Athlone Press, 1971), pp. 131-152 (p.133).

[60] Chris Given-Wilson, *The Royal Household and the King's Affinity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986), pp. 238-9.

the apparent extent of the abuse of the system. J. M. W. Bean argued that Richard saw this as an opportunity 'for the restoration and maintenance of his own authority'.[61] In 1397 another bill was drawn up which aimed its criticism directly at Richard who had been distributing his livery of the white hart quite extensively.[62] The 1399 statute forbade the lords from distributing any livery badges – only the livery of the king was permitted and then it could not be given 'to anyone below the rank of esquire which was surely a reaction to Richard's Cheshiremen'.[63] Given-Wilson connected the legislation on livery with an increased use by Richard at times of crisis and suggests that it was 'political' legislation.[64] The degree to which the Commons endeavoured to try and control the use of badges and liveries confirms Given-Wilson's above point which acknowledged the power of this particular visual genre to influence political life.

It was not until the early years of the reign of Henry VI that the problem of badges re-emerged. In 1427 and 1429 parliament expressed concern at the apparent abuse of the giving of livery and a fine and prison sentence were to be imposed on anyone granting livery for the reason of maintenance.[65] However, the enforcement of such laws was lax and once again no solution was found to control the issuing of badges. The influence of the aristocracy played no small part in this lack of success as they were the very group who were often abusing the law for their own personal gain. In April 1457 Henry VI commanded that the sheriff of Worcester read a proclamation regarding the misuse of livery: 'the king has learned what disturbances, riots, unlawful assemblies, murders, homicides and mischiefs daily result from liveries of badges and cloth given'.[66] This list of offences attributed to livery emphasises the effectiveness of the medium at *agitation*. Edward IV, like Henry VI, was faced with the same problems and similarly failed to grasp the nettle in terms of controlling the situation. Statutes were issued in 1468 that declared retaining to be illegal but Charles Ross stated that no evidence has been found to show that they were enforced.[67] In 1472 Edward IV wrote to Coventry asking for the control of liveries, the said letter being proclaimed in the market place for all the inhabitants to hear.[68]

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[61] J. M. W. Bean, *From Lord to Patron: Lordship in Late Medieval England* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1989), p. 204.
[62] Given-Wilson, *Royal Household*, p. 239.
[63] Ibid., p. 240.
[64] Ibid., p. 241.
[65] R. A. Griffiths, *The Reign of Henry VI* (Stroud: Sutton Publishing, 1998), p. 134.
[66] *CCR,1454-1461*, p. 205. This writ was issued to other county sheriffs.
[67] Charles Ross, *Edward IV* (London: Methuen, 1983), p. 412.
[68] *Coventry Leet Book*, pp. 373-5.

Thus it appears that the over-use of livery, and badges in particular, caused great concern to the Commons and monarch during the late fourteenth century and mid-fifteenth century that resulted in attempts at their prohibition. This need to curb the use of badges confirmed that they were indeed efficient at *agitating* large groups of the population whether it be for a lord or a king. Bean stated that despite successive attempts at the control of livery there was little serious enforcement of the legislation.[69] From Richard II through to Richard III there developed an increasing use of badges as their political importance intensified in relation to the political crises that were taking place. Their flexibility and easy distribution gave them an advantage and immediacy over other methods of propaganda and they were able to reach a large and diverse audience.

Architecture.

Architecture, like effigies, provided the opportunity to legitimise and commemorate through the use of art on a more monumental scale. David Starkey's essay on Ightham Mote clearly demonstrated how the use of heraldic emblems in architecture was meant to express political allegiance and social hierarchy.[70]

The English occupation of parts of France during the Hundred Years War afforded the opportunity for architectural propaganda to be employed abroad. Such was the scale of the English presence in France during the reign of Henry V, that in order to execute the necessary repairs to buildings and defensive structures, large numbers of English craftsmen were sent over to help.[71] They were also employed in the construction of new building projects as well as probably being responsible for the addition of royal arms to certain strategic or prominent buildings in order to enforce the *integration* and establishment of the English presence. Henry V, wanting to demonstrate the permanence of the English began to build a palace in Rouen and a new castle in Harfleur. Henry died before the castle was completed and in fact it was still unfinished when Rouen fell in January 1450 and the removal of all English arms in both the castle and palace was ordered by the French royal council and, by the following May all traces of the English occupation had been erased.[72] Edward IV spent considerable sums in

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[69] Bean, *From Lord to Patron*, p. 208.
[70] Starkey, 'Ightham Mote', pp. 153-161.
[71] *The History of the King's Works*, vol. I, *The Middle Ages*, ed. J. Allen Brown, H. M. Colvin and A. J. Taylor (London: HMSO, 1963), pp. 457-458. In April 1417 (Normandy) rations were supplied for 100 masons, 120 carpenters and 42 smiths, p. 458.
[72] Christopher Allmand, *The Hundred Years' War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), p. 137.

maintaining the English occupation around Calais. At Guines Castle 'the walls were ornamented with shields of the arms of St. George, King Edward 'the old arms of the castle', and the arms and devices of 'divers lords and magnates''.[73] The English had obviously incorporated these arms as political propaganda, in an attempt to *integrate* themselves with the French and create a permanent reminder of their authority.

Nicola Smith regarded both the pulpits of York and Canterbury as statements of Lancastrian propaganda, tracing the kings' genealogy in sculpture and their hereditary rights. Smith said that the York pulpitum was 'a straightforward, not to say triumphalist, assertion of the legitimacy of the Lancastrian establishment'. Edward IV's campaign to remove images of Henry VI from churches was indicative of the power that the visual image provoked. Edward was trying to establish the Yorkist regime whilst removing the opportunities for Henry's cult to survive and with it thoughts of Lancastrian revival. Archbishop Booth said of the York statue that the veneration of the image also resulted in the 'vilification of our lord Edward IV, king of the English'.[74] However, despite the removal of Henry VI's statue in York Minster people still came to pay homage at the place where it had stood.[75] By implication this shows how the visual image had been absorbed into the public memory. The use of dynastic imagery within a religious setting could be said to give it more gravitas and legitimacy as well as the opportunity to further *integrate* the dynasty to a wider audience.

Images of heraldry and badges were incorporated into stained glass and, although religious in setting, the glass often had secular or political themes incorporated into the designs. David King's article on the stained glass of Norfolk churches identified examples of political propaganda being displayed within a religious setting. In the Harling panels King interprets the depiction of the parhelia, as seen by Edward IV, in the glass as propaganda. More obvious propaganda was to be seen in the portrayal of Sir Robert Wingfield wearing the Yorkist collar of suns and roses with the pendant lion. King conceded that it was not possible to confirm with any certainty whether the intention of these windows was to publicise the Yorkist cause but the evidence of the connections of the patrons did suggest that a political aspect was intended

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[73] *The History of the King's Works*, vol. 1, p. 453.

[74] Richard Marks, 'Images of Henry VI', in Jenny Stratford (ed.), *The Lancastrian Court*, Harlaxton Medieval Studies, XIII (Donington: Shaun Tyas, 2003), pp. 111-124 (p. 122), citing *The Fabric Rolls of York Minster*, ed. J. Raine, Surtees Society, 35 (1858), pp. 208-10.

[75] Nicola Smith, *The Royal Image and the English People* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2001), pp. 13, 16, 17.

within the designs. [76] Although they have little immediacy about them, one may surmise that the sight of such badges may have initiated conversations about the meaning of the device at many levels and potentially have provoked political discussion or debate about the wearer of certain livery and their affiliations and views. Stained glass formed part of the complex visual library of medieval commemoration and as such was a type of *integration* propaganda.

Paintings.

For the average medieval parishioner their local church wall would have been their first exposure to painting. These wall paintings were essentially an aide-memoire to help the congregation remember the story of the bible and reinforced the major sermon topics.[77] Although not political in nature their importance lies in their role in introducing certain codes and symbols that would later become familiar within a political context. They enabled the audience to read various signs and interpret them thus making them visually literate and able to apply this technique to the visual genre used in a political setting.

Erwin Panofsky stated that, 'an historical painting is, in a sense, a vehicle of communication' suggesting that art had another purpose than merely to appeal to the observer at a decorative level.[78] He saw it as a method to convey certain messages, whether political, social or religious. The following section will explore the limited genre of portrait painting. This was not a period known for its quantity of portraiture unlike the later Tudor period and, therefore there are few examples to examine. David Starkey stated that during the Tudor period 'in straight forward royal portraits ... propaganda ruled supreme'.[79] Unlike his forbears Richard II developed his own style of kingship, one dimension of which was patronage of the visual arts, including representations of himself for public display. M. V. Clarke was correct to emphasise the significance of the visual genre, particularly as a political medium 'it must be remembered that Richard's subjects could read a coat more easily than they could read a

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[76] David King, 'Reading the Material Culture: Stained Glass and Politics in Late Medieval Norfolk', in Linda Clark (ed.), *Rule, Redemption and Representations in Late Medieval England and France*, The Fifteenth Century VIII (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2008), pp. 105-23, 118,119,123.
[77] E. W. Tristram, *English Wall Paintings of the Fourteenth Century*, ed. Eileen Tristram (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1955); E. Clive Rouse, *Medieval Wall Paintings* (Princes Risborough: Shire Publications, 2004).
[78] Erwin Panofsky, *Meaning in the Visual Arts* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1993), p. 35.
[79] David Starkey, 'Representation through Intimacy', in I. Lewis (ed.), *Symbols and Sentiments* (London: Academic Press Inc., 1977), pp. 187-224 (p. 191).

letter'.[80] Richard II commissioned his portrait for Westminster Abbey, and it combined both religious and political propaganda. It has been said of the portrait that 'it would seem that Richard II commissioned this portrayal of himself to represent his perpetual presence in the choir of the abbey'.[81] Paul Binski regarded the Westminster portrait 'as a monument to royal paranoia' and argued that it was almost impossible to determine whether it represented the 'political or personal insecurities of Richard'.[82] Binski felt that the portrait gave the impression of distance between the audience and the monarch, a reflection of Richard's views on kingship.[83] The date of the portrait was c.1390-1399, a similar time to the production of the Wilton Diptych. These later years of his reign were troubled and, perhaps as much for his own benefit, these commissions were meant to reinforce his kingship at a personal level as well as to a national audience.

Binski believed the portrait was a reflection of Richard's self-image with 'its exceptional form, provoking the kind of genuflection appropriate to an icon, acted as a highly artificial sign of the anxieties of Richard's court towards the end of his reign'.[84] A further example of Richard's presence in the abbey was the large panel representing his personal emblem of a white hart sited in the muniment room.[85] Richard's commissions for Westminster Abbey reflected his idiosyncratic approach to kingship and the 'advertising' of his badge of the white hart which he had adopted in about 1390.[86] Later medieval monarchs do not have appeared to use art in the same way as Richard II. It could be said that Richard II was ahead of time in terms of propagandising his own kingship through the arts. The public display of these commissions would have reached a privileged and sizeable audience, including the nobility and the influential Londoners. Richard was endeavouring to instil and *integrate* his image and inheritance into the fabric of both the abbey and the eyes of the audience who saw the images.

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[80] M. V. Clarke, *Fourteenth Century Studies*, ed. L. S. Sutherland & M. McKisack (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1937), p. 272.
[81] J. Alexander and P. Binski (eds), *Age of Chivalry*: *Art in Plantagenet England 1200-1400* (London: Royal Academy of Arts, 1987), pp. 517-518.
[82] Binski, 'Hierarchies and Orders', p. 82.
[83] Paul Binski, *Westminster Abbey and the Plantagenets: Kingship and the Representation of Power*, *1200-1400* (New Haven: Yale University Press, for the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, 1995), p. 203.
[84] Binski, *Westminster Abbey*, p. 204.
[85] Ibid., p. 203.
[86] Ibid., p. 204. Binski refers to the 'ocular control' that existed at court at this time which would explain these large-scale works in such a public place.

These paintings were as much about his personal reign as they were about the longevity of the Plantagenet dynasty.

Although non-royal portraits are extremely rare during this period there are two worth examining. First, a portrait of the diplomat Edward Grimston, who was in the service of Henry VI, was painted in about 1446 by the artist Petrus Christus who worked out of Bruges. It clearly shows Grimston holding a chain of SS's, the Lancastrian collar, at the very forefront of the picture.[87] Second, a portrait of John Donne by Hans Memling shows him wearing the Lion of March pendant that was Edward IV's personal badge. He and his wife were probably part of the wedding party that attended Margaret's marriage to Charles of Burgundy in 1468. It is interesting to note that the Donne family arms, like those of Grimston, are more discreetly portrayed in the background suggesting that Memling painted them in their wedding party attire and like the effigies already discussed, royal badges of allegiance were regarded as superior to familial motifs. These portraits would have been commissioned with the aim of dynastic *integration* as well as commemoration to establish a familial link with certain dynasties and historical events.

Portraits of a rather unconventional style but with a definite political message were exhibited in France in 1438. According to the author of the Parisian Journal paintings on cloth were displayed on the gates of Paris depicting William de la Pole, Robert, Earl of Willoughby (sic) and Sir Thomas Blount. [88] The pictures showed the knights, who had been accused of perjury, hanging by their feet on the gallows and with two crows appearing to pick out their eyes. Whoever was responsible for these paintings was not only an accomplished artist but also very politically aware of the apparent injustices caused by the presence of the English in Paris. The timing of these pictures was curious as the English had lost Paris in April 1436 but they show that the Parisians were not going to forget the injustices of the men portrayed and the use of such a public space was inevitably going to attract a large audience. However, no direct response from the public was recorded, apart from the author himself who referred to them as 'very unpleasant pictures' which one can assume was the response of the majority of the audience.[89]

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[87] Marks and Williamson, *Gothic*, p. 44. See www.nationalgallery.org.uk/paintings/petrus-christus-edward-grimston.

[88] *A Parisian Journal 1405-1449*, trans. Janet Shirley (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), pp. 323-4.

[89] *Parisian Journal*, pp. 323-4.

The most famous contemporary work of art was the Wilton Diptych produced for Richard II. Although this was essentially produced for Richard's private devotions it would still have been seen by the various members of his own household and also those of any other families that he stayed with when travelling. Its propagandist possibilities were thus limited but it still merits a brief discussion due the extensive use of motifs that were found on more public works that could be regarded as having political significance.

The diptych associated Richard with Edward the Confessor rather than St. George thus emphasising Richard's desire for peace with France rather than war as associated with St. George. Extensive use was made of Richard's livery of the white hart and also the broomcod, which was the livery of Charles VI, invoking another connection to the French throne. It had been suggested that, as the Latin name for broomcod is *planta genista*, it was adopted in reference to the name Plantagenet.[90] In attempting to assess whether the diptych carries any political significance one needs to establish its date of execution. Despite the youthful appearance of Richard, M. V. Clarke argued, the diptych was probably painted towards the end of his reign. There were several reasons that drew to her to this conclusion. First, the omission of Anne of Bohemia's arms suggested it was painted either before their marriage in 1382 or after her death in 1394. Second, the monk of Evesham suggests that the white hart was given to Richard at the Smithfield tournament in October 1390. Third, the use of Charles VI's livery of the broomcod probably coincides with the Anglo-French entente of the period from 1396. Finally, Clarke linked the youthful portrayal of Richard on the diptych with two manuscripts produced by Phillipe de Mézières for the crusading Order of the Passion. Clarke concluded that 'a crusading picture with the liveries of England and France united and executed between 1396-1399 cannot be traced to any other origin than de Mézières's propaganda for the Order of the Passion'.[91] The use of pictures in de Mézières's manuscript showing the dress and badges for members was produced with the intention of recruiting men in England for the Order.[92] It was essentially a piece of propaganda for the Order of the Passion and the influence of the pictures was reflected in the Diptych.[93] Richard must have been very affected by the manuscript's style and it reflected his ideal of kingship based on orthodox piety.

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[90] Dillian Gordon, *Making and Meaning: The Wilton Diptych* (London: National Gallery Publications Ltd, 1993), p. 52.

[91] Clarke, *Fourteenth Century*, p. 292.

[92] Ibid., p. 288. The campaign was successful in recruiting twenty five men, who included, Lancaster, Gloucester and York.

[93] Ibid., p. 291.

The exterior of the diptych revealed a white hart whilst the other side showed the royal arms of both England and France together with the arms of Edward the Confessor. These are the pictures that were most likely to have been seen by members of the household. Both images were secular reinforcements of Richard's heraldic motifs that were used elsewhere. As a statement of Richard's belief in kingship it is significant as this was the motivating rationale behind many of his political decisions. It was also a reflection of his personality which will be discussed in a subsequent chapter.

Thus far the discussion about visual propaganda has focussed on domestic propaganda. The propaganda during the Hundred Years War was centred on the need to legitimise the English claim to the throne by a plausible genealogical route. Elizabeth Danbury showed that charter decoration during the Hundred Years War was used for propagandist ends.[94] Although both English and French documents travelled across the Channel in an attempt to legitimise each other's claims Danbury believed that essentially they were aimed at a domestic audience to maintain support for the war.[95] Of course it was as important to keep the home population believing the claims to maintain support, as it was to try and to get the French to believe them. The charter artists portrayed the English monarch in French royal robes and combined this with other visual cues from genealogies. Danbury said of these artists that they were not only skilled artistically 'but in their capacity, within a small space, to illuminate a cause'.[96] These charters would have been seen by only a minority but it was a group without whose support the campaign would have foundered.

As Regent the Duke of Bedford saw it as his mission to reinforce English claims to the French throne through the production and dissemination in France of a persuasive genealogy. The genealogy commissioned by the Duke of Bedford, to further legitimise Henry VI's claim to the French throne was 'a very shrewd piece of late medieval dynastic advertisement' that must have had a considerable impact.[97] The genealogy was to accompany the poem by Lawrence Calot that Bedford had displayed side by side in Notre Dame and in a number of other French churches to emphasise the dual descent of Henry VI to both the English and

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[94] Danbury, 'English and French Artistic Propaganda', pp. 75-97.

[95] Ibid., p. 79.

[96] Ibid., p. 97.

[97] J. W. McKenna, 'Henry VI of England and the Dual Monarchy: Aspects of Royal Political Propaganda, 1422-1432,' *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 28 (1965), 145-162 (p. 152).

French thrones.[98] Rowe regarded the genealogy as 'a perfect interpretation of the Treaty of Troyes' and its distribution around France was meant to reinforce Henry's claim to the throne.[99] Bedford also produced new coinage to stress the nature of the dual monarchy of Henry VI.[100] The juxtaposition of the shields of England and France reproduced on the new coinage was meant to be regarded as 'an heraldic representation of the dual monarchy'.[101] The change of the design of the *salute*, the main gold coin in France, in which the figures of Henry VI and the angel are reversed, would have reached an extended audience. McKenna regarded this reversal as a definite political statement by Bedford on behalf of the infant Henry.[102] The methods employed by Bedford to try and secure his nephew's dual monarchy confirmed the importance and influence that was attached to the visual genre. Bedford's use of coins and genealogies suggest that they were important components in the *integration* campaign to influence French opinion.

Conclusion.

Art as propaganda during this period, although varied in media, was essentially embodied in the heraldic tradition. It could be found in both secular and religious settings as seen in stained glass windows. Some genres, such as badges, would have had a large reception, even international in the case of the French wars. Their very size and variety gave them a portability ideally suited to situations of political uncertainty and flux. The regular use of legislation to control the distribution of livery reflected its ability to create dissent and arouse unrest and confirmed that this particular mode of visual communication was effective and dangerous in its ability to *agitate* various groups. It was used in the knowledge that it had political implications and was not just decorative and this was why it had to be controlled.

Other genres, such as effigies and portraits, were by nature less mobile and reached a smaller audience. By their very size they were meant to be regarded as more substantial and impressive to the onlooker. However, it was this distinction between the genres that made them suited to a variety of occasions for propaganda to reach different audiences. On occasions when a large audience needed to be engaged the badge was the perfect medium, but on other

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[98] B. J. H. Rowe, 'King Henry VI's claim to France in picture and poem', *The Library*: *Transactions of the Bibliographical Society*, 4th ser., XIII (1932-1933), 77-88 (p. 82); McKenna, 'Henry VI', p. 151.
[99] Rowe, 'King Henry VI's Claim', p. 83.
[100] Above, Welch n .8.
[101] McKenna, 'Henry VI', p .147.
[102] Ibid., p. 149.

occasions when a particular audience was to be targeted then the more complex genealogies were more apposite. The Hundred Years War produced visual propaganda in the form of genealogies and charter decoration that was specifically directed at the *integration* of the French population. The role of memory was very important to the medieval psyche and was reflected in the extensive use of livery and badges in glass and stone. Architecture and effigies were to a degree about building a dynastic history that sought to legitimise often shaky foundations.

Physical.

This next section examines the role of *visual* propaganda through the use of the human body. The human body was and is a powerful means of communication, both in life and death. The regal appearance of a monarch was meant to instil confidence in those who saw him whilst the display of a corpse was seen as a means of confirming death and exhibiting control. Within this context the role of the body in death will be discussed including executions and the display of body parts and the reaction to such displays. Secondly, the power of the living body will be considered with regard to military displays, royal processions and public humiliation.

Executions and the display of corpses.

In a talk to a committee of the Chinese politburo the twentieth-century Communist leader Deng Xiaoping said 'as a matter of fact, execution is the one indispensable means of education'.[103] Five hundred years earlier executions were still one of the most emphatic methods of *visual* propaganda available. Public executions had a complex role to play in medieval life; they enforced the authority of the king and his regime and were meant to quell any further transgressions. Commenting on the Kentish rebellion, 1438-9, *Gregory's Chronicle* remarked that the display of the heads of the rebels in the county was 'to cause men to be ware'.[104] Another example shows the insecurity of the Yorkists as in March 1461 before the battle of Towton: 'one Walter Walker, grocer, who had been guilty of making light, as it was thought, of the new king's title to the throne, was beheaded in Smithfield as a warning to other doubting Thomases'.[105] Executions were also regarded as a reassurance to the audience in seeing justice done when witnessing a penitent receiving absolution. The fact that executions

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[103] Paul Theroux, *Riding the Iron Rooster* (London: Penguin, 1988), p. 123.
[104] 'Gregory's Chronicle', in *Historical Collections*, p.181.
[105] Cora L. Scofield, *The Life and Reign of Edward the Fourth*, I (London: Frank Cass & Co. Ltd., 1967), p. 160. Scofield does not cite the source for this quotation.

were such spectacles suggested that the involvement of the public was essential. Seth Lerer emphasised the relationship 'between legal practice and social imagination that was designed to assure deterrence by creating memorable spectacle'.[106] Mervyn James's description of the Corpus Christi play as a projection of the 'communal piety of community' was applicable to the viewing of an execution.[107] It revealed an inherent understanding of what was acceptable behaviour and it was a public agreement of the need for justice to be seen to be exercised.

The manner of an execution followed certain social guidelines. On their way to the place of execution the gentry were generally allowed to ride on horseback but could be humiliated by being taken in a wooden cart, occasionally being forced to travel sitting backwards. If they were guilty of treason their heraldic arms were reversed which was a signal of both a physical and social death.[108] This was meant to deter further transgressions whilst reinforcing authority and literally destroying the perpetrator's body, traitors often having been dragged to the site of execution.[109]

Danielle Westerhof stated that the urban audience was expected to take part in an event that was intended for the traitor's social circle, which was often non-urban and thus an execution was able to communicate to different social groups.[110] The common criminal was usually forced to walk. It can be assumed that the audience would be cognisant with such protocol for the event to have the desired impact.

In 1384 during a turbulent period in London politics between a former mayor, John of Northampton and the current mayor, Nicholas Brembre, Walsingham tells of the effect of the execution of an adherent of Northampton: 'this action curbed the trouble among the commons for the time being and put an end to the revolt of the people'.[111] This example reveals that the execution had worked in quelling unrest but unfortunately this is a relatively rare example

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[106] Seth Lerer, '"Representyd now in yower sight": The Culture of Spectatorship in Late Fifteenth-Century England', in Barbara A. Hanawalt and David Wallace (eds), *Intersections of Literature and History in Fifteenth-Century England*, Medieval Cultures, 9 (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), pp. 29-62 (p.30).
[107] Mervyn James, 'Ritual, Drama and the Social Body in the Late Medieval English Town', *Past and Present*, 98 (1983), 3-29 (p. 13).
[108] Danielle Westerhof, 'Deconstructing Identities on the Scaffold: the Execution of Hugh Despenser the Younger, 1326' *JMH*, 33 (2007), 87-106 (p. 103).
[109] Danielle Westerhof, *Death and the Noble Body in Medieval England* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2008), p.123.
[110] Westerhof, *Death and the Noble Body*, pp. 116-117.
[111] *St. Albans*, p. 719.

revealing contemporary reaction. However, the general consensus among many of the chroniclers was that these executions often had an adverse effect on the population, although of course rebellion and resentment was more interesting to comment on and record than compliance. They may have quashed rebellious behaviour but the texts demonstrate that the medieval population had little appetite for excessive retribution. In 1381 Richard II sought vengeance, rather than justice, on the rebels and set about the matter with a ruthlessness that horrified the population: 'the populace shuddered at the spectacle of so many gibbeted bodies exposed to the light of day'.[112] Richard made a bad misjudgement in his response to the rebels and his callous treatment of the rebels had a negative effect. In 1450 the treatment of the rebel Jack Cade's own death had a similar effect. He was given a ritual beheading at Newgate despite the fact that he had died previously from injuries. Subsequently his head was displayed on London Bridge whilst the towns of Norwich, Salisbury, Gloucester and Blackheath were each sent a quarter to display to their citizens. However, according to the *Waltham Annals*, it would appear that London began to suffer from 'head' fatigue: 'London said ther shuld no more hedes be set upon ther'.[113] So many rebels were executed that Gregory remarked: 'men calle hyt in Kente the harvyste of hedys'.[114]

After the Lincolnshire rebellion when the ships of Warwick and Clarence had been captured the Earl of Worcester passed what was regarded as an excessive humiliation on the prisoners:

> and so xx persones of gentylmen and yomenne were hangede, drawne, and quartered, and hedede; and after that thei hanged uppe by the leggys, and a stake made scharpe at both endes, whereof one ende was putt in att bottokys, and the other ende ther heddes were putt uppe one.[115]

This act had a negative effect amongst the people and thus lost any propagandist benefits with regard to the upholding of justice. When it came to Worcester's own execution the crowds that came to watch were so great that 'the people presed so fast abowte hym that thofficers were fayne to turne in to the fflete with hym'.[116] The gathering of such a large crowd revealed his unpopularity and more importantly that people were aware of what was politically

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[112] *Westminster*, p. 15. A source hostile to Richard and thus probably biased in its reporting.
[113] Gordon Home, *Old London Bridge* (London: The Bodley Head, 1931), pp. 131-2. I am grateful to Prof. Caroline Barron for this reference.
[114] 'Gregory's Chronicle', in *Historical Collections*, p. 197.
[115] Warkworth, p. 9.
[116] 'Vitellius A. XVI', in *Chronicles of London*, ed. C. L. Kingsford (Gloucester: Alan Sutton, 1977), p. 182.

acceptable. The commons had realised that Worcester's actions had not been legitimate; he was meant to act within the law not outside it. Executions by the state appeared to have received mixed responses from the public judging from the textual sources. Even when the audience understood the reason for the execution they were still conscious that these events should be carried out within the letter of the law and in proportion to the crime.

It was not just the monarch who used executions to make a public statement, and there were occasions when other factions used executions to express their message of complaint or displeasure. The rebels in 1381 made their own political statement with several beheadings as the *Westminster Chronicler* reported:

> The heads of the archbishop and the rest were stuck on poles and carried through the city streets, as if in triumph after some great victory, being set up on London Bridge. The hallowed head of the archbishop they set in the middle and higher than the others and to make it specially recognizable among them they nailed on it a scarlet cap.[117]

The rebels were showing their supporters how successful they had been whilst at the same time issuing a warning to the crown that they could use the same methods and venues for executions as the authorities. The *Anonimalle Chronicle* recounted another episode from 1381of the rebels' behaviour: 'at this time they captured three of Thomas de Bamptoun's clerks, cut off their heads and carried them about with them on poles for days as an example to others'.[118] Bamptoun had been one of the commissioners assigned to collect the outstanding poll tax in Brentwood, Essex that included the town of Fobbing which was one of the first to rise up against the tax. His threatening behaviour resulted in his speedy exit to London but it was his clerks who were made an example of in the locality.

During the Kentish uprising in 1450 Jack Cade had Lord Saye beheaded and publicly degraded him by having his naked corpse dragged through the streets. He caused further offence by putting Saye's head next to that of Crowmer, the sheriff of Kent, to make it appear 'that oon to kysse that other'.[119] Interestingly, the chronicler stated that this act did not affect Cade's popularity, rather the subsequent robbing of Philip Malpas and Geerst caused him to lose support as the Londoners feared that he would rob them too.[120] Cade's mistake in behaving like a common thief lost him popular support whereas his physical despoilation of Lord Saye

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[117] *Westminster*, p. 7.
[118] R. B. Dobson, *The Peasants' Revolt of 1381* ([2nd edition] Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1983), p. 125.
[119] 'Vitellius AXVI', in *Chronicles of London*, p. 161.
[120] Ibid., p. 161.

was acceptable revealing that the population understood what was politically defensible in terms of law breaking. This could imply that the Londoners were mere onlookers, or politically passive but rather it suggests an en-masse political and moral conscience of an informed audience.

The visual impact of a head was important enough for them to have been sent nationally in order to be displayed in public places such as market squares or city gates. It was the same case for the quarters that were despatched to various towns. The quartering of a corpse had a two-fold purpose. First, it identified the criminal as a traitor and second, it provided a four-part message to be despatched around the kingdom.[121] In 1403 after the death of Henry 'Hotspur' Percy at Shrewsbury his quarters were sent to London, Newcastle on Tyne, Bristol and Chester with his head also, the cost of which was to be met by the exchequer.[122] Presumably his head was sent to Chester as he had been justiciar of Cheshire and maybe due to the connection that the town and county had had with the late Richard II. After the death of Hotspur's father, Henry Percy, at Bramham Moor in 1408 his severed head was sent to London whilst his quarters were despatched to York, Newcastle, Lincoln and Berwick which were all areas of Percy support.[123] In 1441 the clerk of Eleanor Cobham, duchess of Gloucester, who had been implicated in her use of witchcraft to try to kill Henry, was executed. His head was set upon London Bridge, whilst his quarters were sent to the centres of learning of Hereford, Oxford, York and Cambridge.[124]

In a letter asking for expenses from two sheriffs of London to Henry VI after the 1450 rebellion there is evidence of how important it was that these heads and quarters were despatched. Through the use of writs the various body parts were sent to named locations for the attention of the mayor or bailiff of the town. The costs of the carriage in this case were born by the sheriffs who were despatching parts as far away as Norwich, Coventry and Gloucester. The importance of taking these parts was stated quite unequivocally 'for and by cause that unneth any persones durst nor wolde take upon hem the caridge of the seyd hed and quarters for doute of her lyves'.[125] This emphasised the importance that the crown placed on ensuring

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[121] Westerhof, *Death and the Noble Body*, p. 125.

[122] *CPR,1401-1405*, p. 293.

[123] Pauline Sheppard Routh & Richard Knowles, 'The Markenfield Collar', *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal*, 62 (1990), 133-140 (139).

[124] 'Cleopatra C IV', in *Chronicles of London*, p. 149.

[125] *Original Letters Illustrative of English History*, ed. Henry Ellis, Second Series, 1 (London: Harding & Lepard, 1827), pp. 112-116.

that the population saw the outcome of rebellion – it was an important means of control or *integration*, albeit through the use of terror and subjugation.

There is ample evidence in the chronicles and other primary sources of the display of body parts, but for these heads and quarters to be successful as propaganda they needed not only to be seen, which they were when so prominently displayed, but also to be identified for the audience to appreciate the political significance. The heads were displayed on poles at a great height above London Bridge potentially at a height that would have made identification quite problematic.[126] If this was the usual case, and we have no evidence to confirm or deny the height of the poles, then this raises a number of questions about the viability of displaying these heads as a means of propaganda. First, some of the heads would already be in a 'distressed' state by the time that they arrived and would therefore be difficult to identify. Second, there is no evidence of any form of written identification at street level. However, there would appear to have been an oral method of communication to identity the victim. Froissart detailed the journey of Sir Hugh Despenser in 1326 from Berkeley castle to Hereford where 'he was dragged on a hurdle through all the streets ... to the sound of horns and trumpets'.[127] In 1382 Walsingham talked of adultresses being paraded around London 'with flautists and pipers preceeding them' apparently to ensure that as many people as possible could see them.[128] This indicated that this was a proven method employed to draw people out from their homes and work to view a spectacle. Proclamations would have been read out by the sheriff whose responsibility it was to organise the carriage and display of heads and quarters. It was necessary for an accompanying text to be read out so that the people could understand both the crime and the punishment and probably the name of the victim, particularly when they were often geographically distant from the site of the execution. There was the likelihood that the original proclamation would have posted up or some other written notice. When carried out thoroughly and legally there is little doubt that the use of executions had the desired impact but when it

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[126] Home, *Old London Bridge*, frontispiece.

[127] Froissart, *Chronicles*, trans. & ed. Geoffrey Brereton (London: Penguin Books, 1978), p. 44. The horns and trumpets were also played as he was led through the towns between Berkeley castle and Hereford. Mancini describes a scene in 1483 where: 'the Genoese began to sound trumpets and horns, and hoisting the king's banners they announced that they would obey the protector', the use of the trumpets was obviously meant to draw attention to the sight of the banners. See Mancini, p. 87.

[128] *St. Albans*, p. 613. From the accounts of the Mercers of London there is evidence that trumpeters were regularly used to accompany the mayor or sheriff. See Lisa Jefferson, *The Medieval Account Books of the Mercers of London,* II (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2009), pp. 698, 728, 986.

was regarded as excessive then it could have a negligible, even negative effect in controlling opposition.

The human cadaver had many uses for a medieval audience as has been shown in the form of heads and quarters. However, it also had propagandist merit, whilst still intact, in proving the death of certain prominent individuals. After the battle of Barnet the Lancastrians perpetuated the rumour that both Warwick and Montagu were still alive but Edward IV was astute enough to ensure that their remains were publicly displayed at St. Pauls:

> Kynge Edwarde commaundyd bothe the Erle of Warwikes body and the Lord Markes body to be putt in a carte ... and there commaundede the seide ij bodyes to be layede in the chyrche of Paulis, one the pavement, that every manne myghte see them.[129]

Apparently this display drew in many people, and their corpses 'were seen by many thousands'.[130] Following a letter from Thomas Fauconberg requesting entry to the city, believing that the earl of Warwick was still alive, the mayoralty replied thus:

> they assured him that the Earl was dead, and that his corpse, as well as that of his brother the Marquis Montagu, had been exposed to view for two days in St. Paul's.[131]

It was also a matter of respect and chivalric etiquette that the bodies of Warwick and Montague were displayed unmutilated for public viewing. The *Historie of the Arrivall* explicitly stated that the bodies were to be displayed in order that 'the people shuld not be abused by feyned seditiows tales' and to quell any rumours that the earl was alive which may have led 'to newe murmors, insurrections, and rebellyons, amongst indisposed people'.[132] This confirmed that this was a necessary visual deterrent against further unrest and this public display of whole corpses, heads and assorted limbs was an effective method of exerting discipline through the use of physical propaganda. The murder of Henry VI finally ended a period of uncertainty for Edward IV and by displaying Henry VI's body Edward IV was literally

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[129] Warkworth, p. 17.

[130] John Adair, 'The Newsletter of Gerhard Von Wesel, 17 April 1471', *Journal of the Society for Army Historical Research*, XLVI (1968), 65-69; the letter from the citizens of London to the Bastard of Fauconberg cited by J. R. Scott, 'Letters Respecting Fauconberge's Kentish Rising in 1471', *Archaeologia Cantiana*, XI (1877), 359–363.

[131] 'Folios 71 - 80: Aug 1470 - ', in *Calendar of Letter-Books of the City of London: L, Edward IV-Henry VII*, ed. Reginald R. Sharpe (London, 1912), pp. 91-100. *British History Online* http://www.british-history.ac.uk/london-letter-books/voll/pp91-100 [accessed 22 March 2016].

[132] *Historie*, p. 21.

laying the ghost of not only the king but the Lancastrian cause to rest as Warkworth described: 'and one the morwe he was chestyde and brought to Paulys, and his face was opyne that every manne myghte see hyme; and in hys lyinge he bledde one the pament ther'.[133] This was *integration* propaganda with the sole aim of confirming the end of the Lancastrian regime and the consolidation of the Yorkist dynasty.

Possibly, one of the most controversial physical displays of a dead monarch was that of Richard III. In the above examples there was an emphasis on the revelation of the king's face for all to see. However, in the case of Richard III Henry Tudor had the naked body of the king slung over a horse and his face hidden from public view.[134] It has been suggested that this was a cleverly constructed piece of propaganda that showed Richard's curved spine or hunchback to its greatest effect.[135] If this was Henry's motivation it did indeed reinforce the supposed wickedness of Richard with his crook back and crook mind that became a Tudor myth immortalised by Shakespeare. It also served to emphasise the end of the Yorkist dynasty and the legitimacy of the Tudor regime in ridding the country of an evil and illegitimate monarch.

The display of both heads and quarters was a regular and accepted method of visual communication, used by both the crown and the opposition. The despatching of various heads and quarters to towns sent a message to the inhabitants not to rebel. In the case of a monarch it was an accepted part of kingship in maintaining order and applying justice. However, if taken too far this relationship with the population could be damaged as may be seen from Richard II's treatment of the Kentish rebels. However, although the action was not popular it was effective as the region caused little trouble afterwards. Executions by the crown were seen as a means to *integrate* whereas when used by rebels they were meant to *agitate* the population. These events took place in a public space reinforcing the importance of public opinion and the need to claim authority and communicate with as large an audience as possible. Events such as executions were brief but the subsequent display of heads and quarters sent a longer term message to the polity.

Public appearances and processions.

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[133] Warkworth, p. 21.

[134] Philippa Langley and Michael Jones, *The Search for Richard III: The King's Grave* (London: John Murray, 2014), p. 207.

[135] Hypothesis suggested by Philippa Langley at a talk on Richard III in conjunction with Michael Jones given at the Ripon Spa Hotel, 26th June 2014.

This next section discusses the impact of the living body on the medieval psyche in terms of its ability to propagandise its audience in a variety of ways. The *physical* manifestations of visual propaganda were expressed through various events, such as processions, military displays or civic entries. These public appearances were more adaptable than the traditional media of *art*. Implicit in an examination of this propaganda is the relationship between performer and his audience. Nicholas Howe emphasised the importance of this bond when he stated that 'each [ceremony] must have a clear understanding of the expectations shared by its audiences or witnesses, especially if it is to make them complicit in its work'.[136] This suggests that great care was taken in the preparation and execution of these occasions to ensure that the correct message was being conveyed. G. L. Thompson's description of events in France was as applicable to fifteenth-century England when he stated:

> Political attitudes can be formed not only by what people read or see or want, but also by events in which they share. It is interesting to examine the political connotations of any large-scale group activity that offers scope for the distribution of information, the generation of emotional excitement and the organisation of considerable numbers of people.[137]

Events such as coronations had a limited audience whereas civic entries reached a far larger and more varied audience.[138] Caroline Barron suggested that 'increasing care was taken both to write the messages …and also to make a written record of the event', leading to the conclusion 'that the political messages were perceived to be important'.[139] Margaret Aston too saw the value in the secular image to the king and government as 'it elevated through splendour and its representations served to instil respect and evoke attitudes and gestures of worship'.[140]

Processions could be used for either *integration*, especially important for any usurping monarch, or for *agitation* purposes. Howe emphasised that ceremonies were important as a means of communicating with an illiterate population and as such prove that this medium was

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[136] Nicholas Howe (ed.), *Ceremonial Culture in Pre-Modern Europe* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2007), p. 1.

[137] Guy Llewelyn Thompson, *Paris and its People under English Rule: The Anglo-Burgundian Regime 1420-1436* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), p. 179.

[138] Gordon Kipling, *Enter the King: Theatre, Liturgy and Ritual in the Medieval Civic Triumph* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), p. 38.

[139] Caroline M. Barron, 'The Political Culture of Medieval London', in Linda Clark and Christine Carpenter (eds), *Political Culture in Late Medieval Britain*, The Fifteenth Century IV (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2004), pp. 111- 133 (p.119).

[140] Margaret Aston, 'The Use of Images', in Alexander & Binski (eds), *Age of Chivalry*, pp. 68-75 (p.72).

an important method of propaganda.[141] The display of magnificence seen in processions and journeys around the kingdom was an effective propagandist method, that both reassured the subjects that all was well or, alternatively imposed the power of the monarch in areas of unrest. Anglo said of the public appearances of monarchs that 'their symbolic function was to affirm the abstract permanence of kingship' whilst also legitimising the current dynasty.[142] William Leahy regarded the royal entry during the Elizabethan age as an event specifically organised by the urban elite whereas the royal progress was an occasion for the monarch to visit the remoter, often rural, areas of his kingdom.[143] All of these events, where the monarch was seen by his public, were traditionally ritualistic but implicit within the established framework was an inherent political awareness by everyone involved.

The coronation of a monarch was an established visual confirmation of a new king's inheritance. Although it was only witnessed by an exclusive audience it was the composition of the spectators that was important in terms of *integration* propaganda amongst the ruling elite. As regent of France, the Duke of Bedford, being an astute propagandist, organised Henry VI's two coronations, first in England in 1429 and then in France in 1431. These were obvious opportunities for English *integration* propaganda to promote the dual monarchy.[144]

However, there was always the problem of misinterpretation, especially abroad, as recorded by the author of the Parisian Journal when the Queen of England arrived at the Bois de Vincennes in 1422 and two ermine cloaks were carried in front of her the 'people did not know what to make of this'.[145] Any propagandist message was lost in this visual ritual although it was probably more to do with cultural differences.

Another opportunity for the king to be regally attired in public was Crown-wearing which became increasingly important as it emphasised, visually at least, the wearer's position. Traditionally kings went 'crowned' at Epiphany, Christmas, Easter, Whitsun, All Saints' and both the feasts of St. Edward, that is all the major dates in the English calendar.[146] Monarchs

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[141] Howe, *Ceremonial Culture*, p. 3. Howe also stated that 'the triumphal entry of a new ruler not only declares his power but also seeks to repress the possibility that not everyone within the community will accept that power' (p.12).

[142] Anglo, *Images*, p. 99.

[143] William Leahy, *Elizabethan Triumphal Processions* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2005), p. 1.

[144] Ailes, *Heraldry*, pp. 93-94.

[145] *Parisian Journal*, p. 176.

[146] Starkey, 'Henry VI's Old Blue Gown', p. 16.

with a weak claim to the throne, particularly usurpers, used these opportunities as 'an appeal to the visual senses' in an effort to integrate themselves with the public.[147] The *Crowland Chronicle* emphasised that in 1470 when Henry VI was restored to the throne: 'ceremonially and in public, the crown was placed on his head'.[148] Strohm cited an example from the 'Vitellius chronicle' about Henry VI's failure to appear 'crowned' on St. Edward's day and how it was commented upon thus confirming the importance of the event.[149] As C. A. J. Armstrong pointed out, both Edward IV and Richard III, 'went crowned' at times of relative calm and not just when their position was in danger'.[150] This marked a change in the nature of being 'crowned' from religious to a more political aspect. It was a visual statement of dynastic politics rather than religious commemoration. This was especially important for Richard III whose claim to the throne was weak. The more opportunities that there were to see the king crowned confirmed his position and further entrenched the dynasty in people's memory.

The civic entry was primarily an opportunity for a town to show fealty to their monarch, either for services rendered or in the hope of recognition. Kipling regarded the civic entry as becoming more of a drama than a ceremony.[151] This had implications for the effectiveness of the event as propaganda because the centrality of the royal ritual was reduced whilst the role of the citizens gained more importance.

In August 1392 there was a visual reconciliation, in the form of a pageant, between the city of London and Richard II. Most probably organised with a great deal of court involvement this pageant had a defined political message for the London audience. According to Caroline Barron the 'message was that it was the duty of the Londoners to show humility and loyalty to their magnificent and magnanimous sovereign'.[152]

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[147] C. A. J. Armstrong, 'The Inauguration Ceremonies of the Yorkist Kings and Their Title to The Throne', in C. A. J. Armstrong, *England, France and Burgundy in the Fifteenth Century* (London: The Hambleton Press, 1983), pp. 73-95 (p. 92).
[148] *Crowland*, p. 123.
[149] Paul Strohm, 'Interpreting a Chronicle Text: Henry VI's Blue Gown', in Matthew Davies and Andrew Prescott (eds), *London and the Kingdom: Essays in Honour of Caroline M. Barron* (Donington: Shaun Tyas, 2008), pp. 335-345 (p.339).
[150] Armstrong, 'Inauguration Ceremonies', p. 93.
[151] Kipling, *Enter the King*, p. 28.
[152] Barron, 'Political Culture', p. 118. Richard further visually emphasised his regained control by insisting that the citizens should place a statue of himself and Anne on the gate of London Bridge, p. 121.

This event was very much about Richard asserting his authority and kingship through the use of physical *integration* propaganda. The message to the Londoners was very clear, that was, he was the king and would not tolerate any further rebellion on their part. An unconventional royal entry may be seen in 1456 in Coventry when Margaret of Anjou entered the town with Prince Edward but without Henry VI. Margaret was visually assuming the role of Queen regent in a political move to maintain the Lancastrian grip on the throne during one of Henry's bouts of illness.[153] By the use of the Jesse Tree as an emblem associated with royal entries, both Margaret and Coventry were seeking to maintain the Lancastrian crown. It was an attempt at *integration* propaganda in the face of growing unrest and opposition among Yorkist supporters.

In the case of France, Thompson saw these events as a moment when 'politics and ceremonial combined to bring affairs of state within the experience of even the humblest citizens of Paris'.[154] It was an opportunity for the whole *communitas* to be brought together in a participatory situation of mutual recognition – both audience and player aware of the importance of their role in the maintenance of the social hierarchy within the realm.

Another opportunity for the whole nation to see the king was provided when there was a royal progress through the countryside. Anglo's argument that royal progresses were just an excuse to escape the plague appears unconvincing if one considers, for example, the progress of Henry V in 1421.[155] This particular progress had a definite political agenda: first, to raise money for the campaign in France, second, to remind the regions of who their monarch was as he had been absent for over three years, and finally, to introduce his new French queen. Henry visited areas of unrest, such as Bristol and Shrewsbury.[156] He also visited the shrines of Beverley, Bridlington and Walsingham which led the chroniclers to focus upon this trip as a 'pilgrimage'.[157] The tangible results of this tour were the loans that were raised, with the largest number of loans raised where Henry had visited.[158] The physical and visual propagandist benefit of seeing the king had worked. The presence of Katherine for part of the journey would have served to illustrate, physically, the dual monarchy and the success of the French campaign.

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[153] Kipling, *Enter the King*, pp. 67-8.
[154] Thompson, *Paris and Its People*, p. 204.
[155] Anglo, *Images*, p.107.
[156] E. F. Jacob, *The Fifteenth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961), p. 194.
[157] James Doig, 'Propaganda and Truth: Henry V's Royal Progress in 1421', *Nottingham Medieval Studies,* XL (1996), 167-179. See p. 173 for Henry's route.
[158] Ibid., p. 172.

It would have encouraged national pride and with it the desire to support continued success in France. This progress encapsulated the essence of how powerful an effect physical propaganda could have and how important it was in the late medieval period.

These various processions all had one common object and that was for the king to be viewed by the public. The traditional events such as coronations were all the more important as *integration* propaganda when an usurpation had taken place. Royal progresses, on the other hand, often had a more prosaic purpose, that is, the raising of money or troops for war, that is, *agitation* propaganda. The latter in particular, were devised with a specific outcome in mind and thus emphasised the accepted use of visual propaganda as integral to politics. Even when the king had returned to London his visit the visual spectacle would continue to influence the audience through the communal sharing of the event and its incorporation into local memory.

As in life, death provided opportunities for political propaganda. Sydney Anglo regarded funerals as of greater importance than a coronation.[159] An opportunity to emphasise dynastic pretensions could not be missed, even if it involved a corpse. The imagery of death had an important place in medieval society as may be seen from the extravagant funeral procession of Henry V.[160] Two examples reveal the importance of this visual ceremony to the politics of the period; the burial of Richard II and, second the reburial of Richard, duke of York. The former had been a legitimate king and the latter pretensions of being one but both funerals had important political messages to convey to the polity. The burial of Richard II will be discussed in the case study on Henry IV below.[161]

The reburial of Richard duke of York in 1476 by his son Edward IV was an example of physical genealogical propaganda to emphasise the Yorkist claim to be the legitimate heirs to the throne. The late reburial of the duke and his son, the earl of Rutland, after their deaths at the battle of Wakefield in 1460 may be due to the turmoil of the early years of Edward's reign, and it was not until he had regained the throne in 1471 that Edward felt sufficiently secure to undertake the task. The procession took place in July 1476 starting in Pontefract, where the duke had initially been buried, and finished in Fotheringhay. It was a very extravagant cortège

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[159] Anglo, *Tudor Images*, p. 100.
[160] P. Tristram, *Figures of Life and Death in Medieval English Literature* (London: Elek, 1976), p. 11.
[161] Below pp. 101-102.

that obviously was meant to be seen by as many people as possible.[162] Edward IV ensured that every opportunity was taken to show that Richard duke of York had been the rightful king, thus confirming Edward as the legal heir to the throne. For example, an effigy of the duke was made for the occasion, an honour usually only reserved for a monarch or bishop.[163] Banners displaying the arms of the duke together with the royal arms further reinforced the notion of a Yorkist dynasty.[164] The elaborate hearse and accompanying peers of the realm together with large numbers of mourners were obviously designed to attract a large audience and to place the event within a nationwide memory. This impressive display of visual *integration* implied that Richard had been the legitimate heir and thus Edward IV had been justified in his usurpation of Henry VI.

Given-Wilson speculated that few of the audience would have understood the symbolism but the effort that was taken to perform these events would suggest otherwise.[165] Again the impact of the spectacle on the population cannot be clearly determined from the textual sources but the fact that these events were so obviously designed to be seen suggests that they were expected to have an impact, particularly on the memory of the audience, through the participation in the rites. Both these funerals served to emphasise the dynastic legitimacy of the Lancastrian regime by Henry IV and the Yorkist dynasty by Edward IV. These visual spectacles were designed to reach and affect a larger audience more easily than, for example, the display of complex genealogies about dynastic descent.

Propaganda that intimidated was regularly used at both home and abroad throughout the period. A monarch could, with a military display, impose his position in a more threatening manner either to instil fear into his foreign enemies or to restore order at home and likewise it could be used by the opposition. This intimidation may be regarded as a form of visual propaganda that could be effective at either *integration* or *agitation*. In 1387 the Appellants used such a show of physical propaganda:

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[162] Anne F. Sutton and Livia Visser-Fuchs, *The Reburial of Richard Duke of York 21-30 July 1476* (London: The Richard III Society, 1996). The French and English accounts of the event are comprehensively examined in this edition.

[163] Ibid., p. 6. Compare this with the lack of an effigy for Richard II and it shows how the Yorkists were attempting to elongate their dynastic rule.

[164] Ibid., p. 7.

[165] Given-Wilson, 'Exeques of Edward III', p. 267.

the lords ... presented themselves to view as if they were about to engage in a struggle to the death, their lines drawn in battle-array and deployed so as to form wings. At news of this the mayor and aldermen promptly went out to give them a peaceable reception.[166]

This event elicited a fast and favourable response from the city of London, perhaps more than a written appeal might have done.

In the autumn of 1457 Henry VI was faced with a trio of opposition. First, rebellion by the Londoners, second the threat of French attack, and finally the Yorkist lords were exercising their might. In response to the situation a large number of archers, 13,000, were despatched to various locations around the capital to intimidate the citizens. However, the archers' presence had a negative impact on the meeting of the great council called by Henry VI and no resolution to the disorder was forthcoming.[167] In January 1458 another great council was called and it is interesting to note that the nobility arrived with large retinues, each trying to out-do the other, much to the worry of the Londoners.[168] This reaction by the nobility shows that they were not going to be intimidated by either their peers or Henry.

Another area overlooked as a means of propaganda was public humiliation which provided the opportunity to discredit your opponent to a wide audience. As Danielle Westerhof stated the chivalric nature of society was associated with both honour and shame 'which exacerbated the dishonour of public humiliation'.[169] The parading of defeated enemies was a great opportunity for *integration* propaganda. Edward's parading of Margaret of Anjou after the battle of Tewkesbury was a very definite political statement: 'Queen Margaret was captured and kept in security so that she might be borne in a carriage before the king at his triumph in London, and so it was done'.[170] Edward was publicly making a statement about his success in defeating the Lancastrian regime and this humiliation of a proud, powerful and unpopular queen was performed with the intention of *integrating* the Yorkist regime.

Humiliating one's enemies did not always have to involve them being physically exhibited. Henry V was capable of being less than honourable in victory, for example, after the siege of Rouen he used explicit visual symbols to insult his conquered enemies: 'and the king had a page behind him on a very handsome horse, carrying a lance to which near the blade he

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[166] *Westminster*, p. 225.

[167] R. A. Griffiths, *The Reign of King Henry VI* (Stroud: Sutton Publishing, 1998), p. 805.

[168] Griffiths, *Reign of King Henry VI*, pp. 805-6.

[169] Westerhof, 'Deconstructing Identities', p. 99.

[170] *Crowland*, p. 127.

had tied a fox's tail after the manner of a pennon, on which many wise people made remarks'.[171] The use of a fox's tail was a well-recognised symbol of defiance, and Henry was possibly mocking the French, even suggesting that they were fools.[172]

The appearance of Henry VI provoked comment amongst the chroniclers on more than one occasion. In October 1470 Warkworth described the deshabille of Henry VI: 'whiche was not worschipfully arrayed as a prince, and not so clenly kepte as schuld seme suche a prince'.[173] This observation suggested that Warkworth was expressing a view that Edward should have been more respectful towards Henry whilst in prison. However, only a few months later there was an event which has stimulated much comment from recent historians, the 'Blue Gown' event, when Henry VI appeared poorly attired in an old gown.[174] The apparent dishevelled appearance of Henry VI on Maundy Thursday, 11 April, 1471 received various contemporary comments. The necessity of Henry VI's appearance was the rapid approach of Edward IV towards London. The *Great Chronicle of London* gave an account of Henry VI being paraded around the streets of London with the Archbishop of York in an attempt to gain support for his continued readeption in 1471: 'evyr he was shewid In a long blew goune of velvet as thowth he hadd noo moo to chaunge with'.[175] Paul Strohm regarded the whole episode with scepticism regarding the text as 'a narrative fabrication'.[176] The *Great Chronicle of London* continued to say that Henry lost support with this appearance – quite the opposite of the supposed intention.[177] This apparently reinforced Starkey's premise that the king's body and physical appearance were of political importance.[178] What does this event have to say in terms of visual propaganda? First, that contemporary chroniclers referred to his appearance, and in the case of the *Great Chronicle*, stated that he lost support, suggesting that the king's appearance was of

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[171] John de Waurin, *Collection of the Chronicles and Ancient Histories of Great Britain*, *now called England*, vol. 2, trans. W. Hardy & E. Hardy (London: Longman, Green, Longman, Roberts and Green, 1864-91), p. 254.

[172] Waurin, *Collection*, p. 306. The full implication of the use of the fox tail in this instance is still unclear due to the many interpretations in use at the time which unfortunately Waurin does not make explicitly clear. The medieval interpretation of the foxtail as a symbol is multifarious and consequently confusing. It was a recognised part of a fool's costume and also had erotic connotations. See Malcolm Jones, *The Secret Middle Ages* (Gloucester: Sutton Publishing, 2002), pp. 55, 109.

[173] Warkworth, p. 11.

[174] Starkey, 'Henry VI's Old Blue Gown'; Strohm, 'Interpreting a Chronicle'.

[175] *Great Chronicle*, p. 215.

[176] Strohm, 'Interpreting a Chronicle', p. 335.

[177] *Great Chronicle*, p. 215.

[178] Starkey, 'Henry VI's Old Blue Gown', p. 2.

political importance. Interestingly, Richard Marks noted that John Blacman said that Henry was always modestly attired and: 'rejecting expressly all curious fashion of clothing'.[179] If Blacman was correct and Henry VI was usually dressed quite simply then why would his slightly untidy appearance have merited such comment from the chroniclers? The event perhaps stresses the distinction between the private attire of the king and the expectations of his public appearance which on the above occasions was not met. As Lancastrian propaganda it failed to impress the Londoners as they subsequently opened the gates to the returning Edward, a king who was always regally attired.

Strohm started from the belief that the story was not true, written with hindsight to amplify the failings of Henry VI but suggests that the event was religious in nature rather than a traditional royal procession or a failed royal 'progresse'.[180] Starkey sought to defend the claim that the Lancastrian court was indigent in comparison with later Yorkist magnificence and states that this one event created this false impression. Although approaching the event from different perspectives they both agreed that visual magnificence was integral to kingship and was expected by the public audience. However, what is perhaps overlooked is whose idea it really was for the procession. Was it really a poorly organised attempt to rally Lancastrian support in the face of the advancing Yorkists or more likely, the wishes of a religious but mentally unstable king to perform his Maundy Thursday duties? If Margaret or Warwick had been in London it is unlikely that Henry would have been allowed to appear in public dressed so poorly and without a fitting retinue. This suggests that Henry was exercising his own royal will and there was no-one present from preventing him from appearing in public inappropriately dressed.

Not all of these events had a positive impact and some were actually counter-productive in terms of the response that they elicited. One such example was during Henry VI's reign which was the trial for heresy of Eleanor Cobham, duchess of Gloucester in 1441. This event was an extremely visual affair including the recantation of Roger Bolingbroke, her clerk, who later suffered a heretic's execution and his head was put on London Bridge whilst his quarters were despatched to known centres of Lollardy.[181] For her part in the alleged plot

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[179] Richard Marks, 'Images of Henry VI', in Jenny Stratford (ed.), *The Lancastrian Court* (Donington: Shaun Tyas, 2003), pp. 111-124 (p.119).
[180] Strohm, 'Interpreting a Chronicle', p. 345.
[181] Chroniclers vary on the destinations, apart from Oxford and Cambridge, to include Bristol, York or Hereford. See R. A. Griffiths, *King and Country: England and Wales in the Fifteenth Century* (London: Hambledon Press, 1991), p. 247.

against Henry, Eleanor was forced to walk with a burning taper in her hand from Westminster to various churches over the following three market days. This ensured that the streets were busy, and she would have been witnessed by large crowds, further compounding her humiliation. There has been speculation that despite her personal unpopularity, the real intended victim of this performance was her husband, the duke of Gloucester. His enemies Suffolk and Beaufort were believed to have been behind her very public and extended punishment.[182] However, the *English Chronicle* revealed that perhaps the theatre of it did not have the desired effect: 'Þe whiche penaunce sho fullfilled and did full mekely, so þat þe pepull hadde off hir grete compassion'.[183] This was a complex visual event involving witchcraft with politics and the intention must have been to raise sympathy for Henry VI whilst *agitating* certain factions to oppose Gloucester, although it appears only to have raised sympathy for Eleanor.

Physical propaganda was the obvious and sometimes brutal companion to that of the art genre. It communicated on a large-scale and involved the participation, either physical or visual, of the audience. Executions, processions and coronations were part of medieval life but this should not diminish their power in affecting public opinion and behaviour. Like art, these visual events sought to *agitate* or *integrate* according to particular circumstances and drew in the population through their attendance.

Case Study: Henry IV and the use of visual propaganda.

Having examined the role of *visual* propaganda it would now be appropriate to see how this genre was used as a means of political communication by Henry IV. Henry IV used various methods of *visual* propaganda both before and during his reign. It can be argued that his success in overthrowing Richard II in 1399 was in part down to the effectiveness of his use of *visual* propaganda and the comparatively limited effort of Richard, in responding. Henry was able to communicate messages about his own strength and purpose, and about his capacity to rule effectively, contrasted with the weakness of Richard, primarily through visual media.

As discussed art was symbolically powerful especially when combined with heraldry. At times of political unrest these signs could be regarded as controversial as seen in 1399 when Bolingbroke destroyed an example of the royal livery and in doing so perhaps made known his

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[182] John Watts, *Henry VI and the Politics of Kingship* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 190.
[183] *English Chronicle*, p. 64.

intention to take the throne: 'above the gates of Warwick castle [was depicted] a crowned hart of stone, which at that time was the said King Richard's livery, ... the duke of Lancaster ordered them to be knocked down, which was done'.[184] Bolingbroke was essentially eradicating the physical symbol of Richard and at the same time removing the opportunity for an audience to remember Richard, in a form of *damnatio memoriae*.

The above action by Henry reveals his awareness of the benefits of art to influence popular perception and as such incorporated them into his own methods of political communication. Henry's usurpation left him in a vulnerable position and the problem of the distribution of livery was indicative of this. In the first year of Henry IV's reign a statute was passed forbidding the lords from distributing badges and again in 1401 a demand was made by Parliament that the giving of livery badges should be abolished except for the King.[185] As Usk recorded:

> It was also decreed that in future the lords of the realm should not give any suit or livery of cloth, or badges, or especially of hoods, to anybody except those servants who remain continuously in their households, because of the numerous seditions which the realm had undergone as a result of such practice.[186]

The Percies were certainly using their badge of a crescent as a method to *agitate* men in order to defend their northern castles.[187] In the summer of 1404, with the possibility of Percy rebellion Henry IV issued a directive that stated that only the king's livery badge was allowed to be worn.[188] This was an attempt to try and limit the Percies' building up a large affinity with which to attack Henry.

The importance of the legislation against liveries was reflected in the level of penalties imposed for not proclaiming swiftly, for example Henry IV's proclamation to the sheriff of York stated he was liable to a £1000 fine if he did not fulfil his duty to proclaim against the wearing of liveries.[189] It may be fair to assume that the level of the fine was directly related to

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[184] *Chronicles of the Revolution*, p. 136.
[185] Saul 'Commons', pp. 302-315.
[186] *Usk*, pp. 83-5.
[187] Given-Wilson, *Royal Household*, p. 242.
[188] Ibid., p. 243.
[189] Doig, 'Political Propaganda', p. 261. The strength of Henry's personality is revealed in the text: 'and under pain of the king's wrath wear any livery save only that of the king, and order to take and commit to custody in prison all whom they shall find wearing the same after that proclamation'. 'Close Rolls, Henry IV: July 1404', in *Calendar of Close Rolls, Henry IV: Volume 2, 1402-1405*, ed. A E Stamp (London, 1929), pp. 375-381. *British History Online* http://www.british-history.ac.uk/cal-close-rolls/hen4/vol2/pp375-381 [accessed 23 April

the importance of the proclamation suggesting that the livery issue was extremely contentious. However, the fact that so many badges have been discovered suggests that these restrictions were largely ignored.[190] The rest of Henry IV's reign appeared untroubled by the issue as Saul stated 'the problem had solved itself: the badges had won Henry the support that he needed to overcome the opposition, thus enabling him to reduce his dependence on them'.[191]

Henry used the livery collar as a counter to the above problems as according to Chris Given-Wilson he was positively profligate with his issuing of livery collars.[192] Given-Wilson saw the use of the SS collar as a major part of Henry's *integration* propaganda.[193] This suggests that Henry, short of funds for traditional patronage, sought to use livery collars as a form of visual currency to establish his presence around the nation. These collars were a mark of prestige which would have been very influential in legitimising and establishing Henry's regality amongst an elite audience.

Henry's use of *visual* propaganda was not restricted to the physical genre which could only really be used sporadically, he also realised the necessity of adopting the more permanent method of *art* in a public space as may be seen in Canterbury and York Minster. Richard Marks found it unsurprising that Henry IV used visual media to promote the Lancastrian dynasty as natural heirs.[194] Marks cited the example of the pulpitum of Canterbury as a work of monumental art representing genealogical propaganda. The statues of previous kings at Canterbury all connected the Anglo-Saxon monarchs of Ethelbert and Edward the Confessor together with Richard II. The link to Richard II was to persuade the viewer that Henry IV was his rightful successor.[195] Richard adopted the same approach at York Minster, a site which would influence a large audience. In 1403 Henry donated a window at York Minster which had a definite *integration* theme within its design. The use of David and Saul was a biblical simile for the relationship between Henry, his grandfather, Edward III and Richard II. Sarah Brown regarded this as propaganda intended to reinforce the Lancastrian claim to the throne.[196] The

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[190] Spencer, *Pilgrim Souvenirs*, p. 280.

[191] Saul 'Commons', p. 314.

[192] Chris Given-Wilson, *Henry IV* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2016), pp. 393-4. Given-Wilson estimates that up to a thousand collars may have been distributed.

[193] Given-Wilson, *Henry IV*, p. 395.

[194] Marks, *Studies in the Art*, p. 106.

[195] Ibid., pp. 107-8.

[196] Sarah Brown, *'Our Magnificent Fabrick': York Minster: An Architectural History c. 1220-1500* (Swindon: English Heritage, 2003), p. 217.

siting of this window in the North aisle would have ensured that it was seen by a large audience, the Minster providing a large space for political propaganda. These two examples, at two of the most important religious centres in the country, are also geographically influential at a strategic level; Canterbury for support against the French and York as a bastion against the Scots. As well as legitimising his usurpation through genealogical imagery Henry was emphasising his right to the throne to an influential clerical audience, whose support he would require.

It has been demonstrated that Henry was quite astute when it came to the use, distribution and control of *art* as propaganda. In the case of *physical* propaganda he appears to have been as efficient. As Henry Bolingbroke he made unashamed displays of military strength, as the Monk of Evesham emphasised describing Bolingbroke's entry into Bristol: '[His] followers went on to Bristol where, with about 100,000 fighting men in all, they made a splendid display of themselves and their arms and weaponry in front of the town and castle'.[197] Bolingbroke continued his journey, reaching Chester where 'he remained for several days displaying himself and his military might in splendid fashion to the people of the town'.[198] This was a particularly astute piece of political propaganda as Chester was a centre of Ricardian support. Although Henry was still only claiming that he wanted his inheritance his approach to Richard at Conway was more suggestive of his ulterior motive: 'the duke of Lancaster arrived with his large and powerful army, which he drew up in awe-inspiring manner in full view of the king'.[199] The show of strength and use of intimidation propaganda by Bolingbroke must have had a psychologically damaging effect on Richard's supporters and was further confirmed by the relative ease with which Henry subsequently took the throne.

Bolingbroke used openly visual methods to publicly humiliate Richard II during August 1399 when returning to London: 'not once during this time was the king allowed to change his clothes; during all the time that he rode through these towns he was dressed in the same simple set of garments'.[200] Richard was not displayed as a king and therefore his authority as perceived

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[197] *Chronicles of the Revolution*, p. 128.

[198] Ibid., p. 129.

[199] Ibid., p. 129.

[200] Given-Wilson, *Chronicles*, p. 130. The route taken to London included Stafford, Lichfield, Coventry, Northampton and St. Albans. The length of the journey and the fact that no effort was made to display Richard in a regal fashion suggest that Bolingbroke intended to display a vulnerable figure to the population. Richard's apparent passivity could be interpreted as the

by those who saw him was no longer credible. It appeared that Bolingbroke took a systematic approach to the visual destruction of Richard's kingship before openly declaring his intentions regarding the throne. The fact the event merited such a comment from the chronicler was significant. This suggested that such behaviour had overtones of a political nature and, given the language used, was in the manner of a deliberate 'staging', of power and intent by Bolingbroke. This was not simply a practical movement of armed men, it carried an underlying message to those that witnessed the event, and the suggested length of the display further intimated that Bolingbroke wanted as many people as possible to see Richard and understand the messages being conveyed. Walsingham stated that Richard was very much a broken man by the time he reached London and that he understood the power of visual propaganda 'for he had asked not to be exhibited to the citizens of London since he had been led to believe that they were taking great pleasure in his downfall'.[201] A contradictory note to this journey is expressed by Walsingham who stated that when they visited religious houses Bolingbroke ensured that 'they showed due kingly respect for the king' and that he 'always deferred to the king, standing behind him'.[202] This was probably a conscious effort by Bolingbroke to promote his own piety, and thus suitability to be a king, by showing respect to the current monarch and hoping to gain the support of the church.

When Henry came to the throne as the duke of Lancaster he had a large personal fortune and retinue at his disposal and consequently stated that he would not impose the burden of taxation on his subjects to the level of Richard II. Henry made a public display of burning the blank charters that had been so unpopular during the reign of Richard II, he 'brente openli atte London all the blacke charteres þat Kynge Richard and his counseall hadde compelled men to seall'.[203] This act was an attempt to symbolically 'burn' the past and initiate a new era of Lancastrian fiscal probity. The dramatic display of flames and smoke would have spoken to a public who felt impoverished by the previous regime more than the spoken word.

At this point Henry was showing himself to be quite accomplished in using visual techniques to communicate with his subjects, he was in fact becoming quite the showman which he further took advantage of with his coronation ceremony. An usurping monarch's

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response of a man who knew that he was defeated or as the calculated response of a man wanting to exhibit his humble side.

[201] Walsingham in *Chronicles of the Revolution*, p. 124.

[202] Ibid., p. 124.

[203] *English Chronicle*, p. 26.

coronation would have been an important opportunity for political *integration*. In the case of Henry IV he sought to legitimise his claim through the introduction of the use of the oil associated with St. Thomas Becket. Burden saw this 'as both a defensive reaction and a proactive response to the current political climate'.[204] The coronation took place on a Monday rather than Sunday so it coincided with the feast day of Edward the Confessor adding more gravitas to the event. Burden notes the irony that the Confessor was closely associated with Richard II.[205] Henry by setting a new precedent was seeking to legitimise the new Lancastrian dynasty and also establishing a connection to Canterbury. Henry would have hoped that the association with Becket and Canterbury would have created the image of a highly pious man and dull the memory and style of his usurpation.

However, this was not the case and Henry IV was to be dogged by the persistent rumours of Richard's escape and subsequent hiding in both Wales and Scotland which led to the raising of support for Richard's re-instatement to the throne. Philip Morgan saw Richard's ghost as the focus of internal dissent and the mascot of external enemies in France, Scotland and Wales.[206] This political turbulence caused by Henry's usurpation meant that Richard required a funeral that showed enough respect to a former monarch but that also made it apparent that Henry was now king. Such was the murmuring amongst the population that in 1400 Henry was forced to exhibit the body of Richard to quell rumours of his survival as Usk recorded: 'the body of Richard, former King of England, was brought, with its face uncovered so that all could see it, to Saint Paul's church in London'.[207] Of course not everyone believed what they saw and later perception has been influenced by the chroniclers and other sources. Even the displaying of Richard's body did not quell the rumours. The French writer Creton was particularly sceptical about the identity of the corpse, believing it to be Richard's chaplain, Maudeleyn who was of similar build: 'nevertheless, they had the body of a dead man carried openly through the city of London, accompanied by the sort of pomp and ceremony that befits a dead king, saying that it was the body of the deceased King Richard'.[208] However, the *English*

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[204] Joel Burden, 'How Do You Bury a Deposed King? The Funeral of Richard II and the Establishment of Lancastrian Royal Authority in 1400', in Gwilym Dodd and Douglas Biggs (eds), *Henry IV: The Establishment of the Regime, 1399-1406* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2003), pp. 35-53.

[205] Burden, 'How Do You', p. 37.

[206] P. Morgan, 'Henry IV and the shadow of Richard II', in R. Archer (ed.), *Crown, Government and People in the Fifteenth Century* (Stroud: Alan Sutton, 1995), pp. 1-31.

[207] *Usk*, p. 95.

[208] *Chronicles of the Revolution*, p. 244.

Chronicle expressed no such suspicion about the provenance of the body on display.[209] Here was an example of two contrasting views affected by a variety of factors from personal allegiance, hearsay and of course propaganda.

There is no evidence that an effigy of Richard was used during the funeral procession.[210] The absence of an effigy for Richard II implied that Henry IV was denying his legitimacy as a king and any dynastic continuity as effigies had been used both for Edward II and III.[211] Effigies were there to 'rationalize' the concept of the king's two bodies.[212] For the most part, however, Richard was accorded the respect of a full royal funeral including a celebration of exequies at St. Paul's cathedral.[213] For the visual propaganda to be believed the majority of the onlookers must have been convinced that it was Richard. Froissart stated that 'over twenty thousand people, men and women, came to see King Richard lying there'.[214] Where Richard's 'royal' funeral departed from the norm was in his quiet burial at the Dominican Friars in King's Langley rather than at Westminster Abbey. This burial was a statement of his death rather than as his status as a former king. The politics of space meant that essentially Henry broke the dynastic link with Westminster and thus visually de-legitimised the Plantagenet claim to the English throne. He also removed the possibility of a shrine developing to Richard and thus the potential for Ricardian support to have a visual and tangible focus.

Despite Henry's attempt at *integration* through visual propaganda to prove that Richard was dead the rumours continued to circulate into the reign of his son. Perhaps if Henry had had a more convincing argument and use of propaganda to justify his usurpation, the cult of Richard II might not have had such a following. Amongst the commons at least the visual display of Richard poorly attired had the desired effect at the usurpation but it was not sufficient for the more educated classes as seen by the continuing opposition to his reign by the friars.

In June 1403 Hotspur finally rose up against Henry but due to Henry's fast reaction, on

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[209] *English Chronicle*, p. 28.
[210] Ibid., p. 41.
[211] Chris Given-Wilson, 'The Exequies of Edward III and the Royal Funeral Ceremony in Late Medieval England', *EHR*, CXXIV (2009), 257-282 (p. 267).
[212] Ernst H. Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Mediaeval Political Theology* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957), p. 505.
[213] *Chronicles of the Revolution*, p. 244. Given-Wilson proposed that the funeral of Edward III showed the presence of both the dead king and the effigy may have been a representation of the 'king's two bodies' in a visual form.
[214] Froissart, *Chronicles*, p. 469.

the advice of George Dunbar, he was killed at Shrewsbury. The volte face of the Percy clan was a serious problem for Henry and he was keen to quell any rumours of Hotspur's survival. Thus Henry had to resort to the public display of the body of Henry Percy after the battle of Shrewsbury as the *English Chronicle* reported in 1403: '& Ser Henris Percie hede wasse smytte off and sette vp atte Yorke leste his men wolde have seide þat he hadde ben alyve'.[215] However, rumours of Percys survival provoked yet another act of *physical* propaganda by Henry as recorded by the *Chronicle of London* who stated that because 'som peple seyde that Sr. Herry Percy was alyve, he was taken up ayen out of his grave, and bounden upright betwen to mille stones, that alle men myghte se that he was ded'.[216] This use of visual *integration* by Henry was the second time that he had used this method to try to assert his authority suggesting that he had still not persuaded the population of his right to the throne through either the use of propaganda or his charisma.

Despite his success at Shrewsbury, disquiet in the North still existed and resulted in the most infamous event of Henry's reign, the rebellion and subsequent execution of Archbishop Scrope in 1405. The causes and circumstances of this Northern uprising will be examined in detail in chapter IV. However, it was indicative that the propaganda of the early part of Henry's reign had not been successful in appeasing the unease about the nature of his accession.

Scrope's unsuccessful rebellion culminated in an act of *visual* propaganda that was to shock the nation, the execution of the prelate. Scrope was beheaded on 8 June 1405 in full view of the city of York on Pentecost Monday which also coincided with the feast of St William, the official saint of York Minster. This meant that there were large crowds, an *audience*, to witness this *visual* propaganda by Henry IV. Later the citizens of York used Henry as an *audience* to seek his forgiveness as described by the *English Chronicle*: 'the citesens off the cite camme oute barefote and vngirte, with halterez aboute their neckes, and fell doune befor the kynge askynge mercye and grace'.[217] Whether they were advised officially to make such a physical statement is not known but their action would certainly have been a deterrent to anyone else seeking to rebel against Henry IV. Henry apparently sent them away brusquely which suggests that he had not instigated this event and had no desire to take any further political advantage

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[215] *English Chronicle*, p. 34.
[216] *Chronicle of London From 1089 to 1483*, ed. Edward Tyrell & N. H. Nicolas (London: Longman, 1827), p. 88.
[217] *English Chronicle*, p. 36.

from the scene as *visual* propaganda.[218]

Henry IV employed *visual* propaganda for a second time when in July 1405 he had the rebel heads displayed. They were exhibited in York, on Ouse Bridge and Bootham Bar, and Newcastle, Guisbrough, Yarm, Scarborough, Helmsley and Richmond.[219] Henry IV's reputation suffered as a direct result of the execution and Scrope became the focus of a cult. Despite the unpopularity of Henry's actions, however, his ruthless and efficient dealing with the uprising meant that he subsequently experienced less unrest during his reign. Walker stated that Henry's quelling of the uprisings was critical in allowing 'a crisis-ridden regime to assume, … some appearance of permanence'.[220] Alastair Dunn stated that Henry's triumph in 1405 lost him enormous popular support and fuelled much anti-Lancastrian propaganda.[221] The execution, brutal and unpopular as it was did apparently result in the cessation of complaint and rebellion against Henry, within England, at least.

Throughout his reign Henry appeared to understand the importance of *visual* propaganda as a means of political communication: perhaps he felt more comfortable with it than perhaps other methods and certainly used it consciously to both *agitate* and *integrate*. The early examples cited above had mixed results but it was the execution of Scrope that finally enabled the *integration* of the Lancastrian dynasty. Henry used *visual* propaganda at the most critical moments of his reign and consciously chose to do so in an almost theatrical fashion.

Conclusion.

Images can fail as well as succeed.[222]

Binski's comment is apposite within the context of this thesis as the main theme was always to ascertain the presence and use of the visual genre as either *agitation* or *integration* propaganda. Assessing the effectiveness of the method was always going to be hindered by a lack of evidence within the sources available. Occasionally, definite outcomes were recorded but often they were not, which made determining the efficacy of the genre difficult.

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[218] Miller, 'Medieval York', p. 58.
[219] *CPR, 1405-8*, p. 69.
[220] Walker, 'Yorkshire Risings', p. 162.
[221] Alastair Dunn, 'Henry IV and the Politics of Resistance in Early Lancastrian England, 1399-1413', in Linda Clark (ed.), *Authority and Subversion*, The Fifteenth Century III, (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2003) pp. 5-23 (pp. 6-7).
[222] Binski, 'Orders and Hierarchies', p. 79.

From the range of media examined it appeared that medieval society was exposed, on a daily basis, to a variety of visual symbolism. Whether the stained glass of great cathedrals, livery badges of a local lord, royal processions or public executions, they all 'spoke' to an audience who was able to decipher the various motifs. Visual communication was available not just to the privileged few as may be seen from the behaviour of rebels such as Cade. This in turn of course reinforced the notion that the whole populace was visually literate and having witnessed other visual events could then repeat them for their own cause. Richard Marks argued that the genealogical monumental art must have influenced public opinion, 'or else the works…would not have been commissioned'.[223] Within both *art* and *physical* lay the notion of memory which served an important role in *integration* propaganda, especially in the case of a usurping monarch. The physical genre provided opportunities for not only commemoration but also the communal participation of experiencing a royal progress or an execution. These visual events were designed to reinforce notions of hierarchy, social cohesion and justice.

As seen in the case of Henry IV it was *visual* propaganda that was used to reinforce his claim to the throne, control unrest and project his kingship. Often these events were large-scale and designed to reach a varied audience and in his case they appeared to have had a mixed outcome. As Joel Burden stated 'it is necessary to recognize that ritual does not weave its magic primarily through the written word, but rather through the impact of images, actions, sounds, gestures and spoken words on the full range of the human senses'.[224] The fact that Henry placed so much faith in the use of *visual* propaganda and it formed an integral part of his programme of *integration* strongly suggests that it was an important part of late medieval political communication as Burden suggests. The use of so much visual communication by Henry IV validates Binski's premise that 'for an image to work in a way that is other than magical or apotropaic it must be seen'.[225] Although Binski is referring to objects as art it is completely relevant to *physical* propaganda as they are all ocular means of communication.

The regular and extensive evidence of the actual use of either *art* or *physical* propaganda as a means of communication suggests that the genre was a successful method. Despite the increase in literacy, particularly from the mid-fifteenth century, the role of visual media did not appear to diminish as the Tudor dynasty subsequently placed an increased emphasis on visual propaganda. Visual propaganda during the late medieval period was

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[223] Marks, *Studies in the Art*, p. 121.
[224] Burden, 'How Do You Bury', p. 36.
[225] Binski, 'Orders and Hierarchies', p.75.

extensive, varied and politically and strategically necessary. It communicated with the whole medieval *communitas*, revealing how large and diverse the political audience was, and how *visual* propaganda was an effective means of communication.

CHAPTER III

Propaganda or Personality: The Greater Persuader?

> When he exhibited himself through the streets of the city he was scarcely watched by anybody, rather did they curse him with a fate worthy of his crimes.[1]

The above quotation from Mancini raises the question of the importance of public support for the king, in this case Richard III. Was it important that Richard III appeared to be disliked? How integral was the monarch's personality to the concept of kingship and its fulfilment? The previous two chapters have explored the nature and existence of propaganda during the period and suffice to say this is the opportunity to examine aspects of propaganda in the context of monarchical success or failure. The use of propaganda in relation to the king's personality will be examined.

The stability of the crown was dependent upon the support of not only the ruling classes but an ever increasingly politically aware populace. How was this support elicited simply through good kingship? What were the criteria and sources of evidence used by medieval society to judge whether a king was successful? If as Mark Ormrod said 'the over-use or abuse of the royal prerogative simply to enhance the king's authority or to silence his enemies was less and less tolerated as the political community came to expect and demand the observation of certain conventions', this would suggest that public expectations of kingship increased as it became more defined within an ideological framework and less dependent on the person of the king.[2]

Medieval kingship provided a framework that the monarch was expected to adhere to and, importantly it was known and understood by the whole polity. The king was regarded as God's representative on earth and as such he was expected to display prudence, justice, temperance and fortitude. He was to be seen to defend both the realm and the church, as well as upholding justice. Ormrod argued that there was also a mythological element within the concept of kingship which was also bound in with the significance of heroic acts together with

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[1] Mancini, p. 95.
[2] W. M. Ormrod, *Political Life in Medieval England, 1300-1450* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1995), p. 82.

the comparison of previous monarch's attributes.[3]

Recent historians of late medieval England have placed varying emphasis on the significance of the royal personality, but it has nonetheless been important for all of them. Bertram Wolffe believed that 'on the personality of the king depended the tone and quality of the life of the realm'.[4] The increasing development of and sophistication of, the engine of late medieval politics changed some of the established notions of kingship. Ormrod believed that these changes both increased the king's power and also raised the expectations of society with regard to the ideal of successful 'kingship'.[5] John Watts's study of kingship under Henry VI drew the conclusion that despite the formalisation of royal administration it was still the king himself who was 'the real centrepiece of public life'.[6] According to Watts the king had two basic tenets to adhere to; listen to counsel and to exercise his personal will.[7] If he failed in these then it would be regarded as 'weak kingship' and could lead to political uncertainty or unrest.[8]

David Starkey regarded personality as a key component of kingship.[9] He divided the Tudor monarchs into one group of 'distant' monarchs and the other 'participatory'. Although citing later rulers such as Elizabeth I as 'distant' and Charles I as 'stiff, proud and prudish' these different *styles* of monarchy are as applicable to the monarchs of the later medieval period.[10] Their different personalities led them to interpret kingship in their own way which could have serious implications for the realm. The successful implementation of the law and public order 'might depend quite simply on the strength, or otherwise, of the king's own personality'.[11] John Watts stated that the later medieval monarch 'enjoyed considerable freedom in the management of his leading subjects, and it was his character and abilities, above all, which determined the fortunes of the polity during his reign'.[12] J. R. Lander argued that 'in

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[3] Ormrod, *Political Life*, p. 62.

[4] Bertram Wolffe, *Henry VI* (London: Eyre Methuen, 1981), p. 25.

[5] Ormrod, *Political Life*, p. 82.

[6] John Watts, *Henry VI and the Politics of Kingship* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 363; Ernst H. Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Mediaeval Political Theology.*

[7] Watts, *Henry VI*, p. 364.

[8] Ibid., p. 364.

[9] David Starkey, 'Introduction: Court history in perspective', in David Starkey, D. A. L. Morgan, John Murphy, Pam Wright, Neil Cuddy & Kevin Sharpe, *The English Court: from the Wars of the Roses to the Civil War* (Harlow: Longman, 1987), pp. 1-24 (p. 6).

[10] Starkey, 'Introduction: Court history', p. 8.

[11] Edward Powell, 'The Restoration of Law and Order', in G. L. Harriss (ed.), *Henry V: The Practice of Kingship* (Stroud: Alan Sutton, 1993), pp. 53-74 (p. 60)

[12] Watts, *Henry VI*, p. 9.

the absence of ideological issues which did not enter politics until the religious divisions the Reformation produced, the government was still mainly a matter of personalities'.[13] Lander's assertion that there was no ideology in fifteenth-century politics is in stark contrast to Watts' viewpoint. If Lander was correct that personality was the dominant factor in medieval kingship; then monarchs such as Henry IV and Henry VI would have struggled to reign for as long as they did unless they fulfilled the ideals of good kingship in the eyes of the population.

Propaganda.

Scholars of the Tudor period such as Kevin Sharpe have looked at the Tudor monarchy with a modern eye to 'brand positioning' and regarded the monarchy as a business that had to establish itself securely in order to be successful.[14] The period under discussion was much less sophisticated, in terms of the printed word or works of art, but the elemental desire to hold onto the throne was nevertheless as strong and consequently various methods of persuasion were employed. Sharpe's premise that dynasties could only survive through the use of aggressive propaganda and self-publicity is more contentious and less pertinent to the later medieval period when the king's personality was an important factor in the fulfilment of kingship together with other factors such as policy and good counsel. In this respect qualities such as the 'charisma' of the king or another noble are not tangible but could be very powerful motivators of support.[15]

What were the responses of the various monarchs at times of crisis? Did they try to ameliorate the situation, or did they resort to autocracy as in the case of Richard II? Did a usurping monarch use different methods to ensure popular support? In particular, given our concerns here, how did the monarch's personality, refracted through policy and concepts of good kingship, combine with the use of propaganda?

Chronicles, letters and other primary sources provide an indication of the regard in which a monarch was held, as seen in the opening quotation, but they unfortunately tended to reflect the bias of the author. How did the medieval populace show its support for a king? A lack of opposition or rebellion during a reign may have been the result of a variety of factors;

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[13] J. R. Lander in Anthony Gross, *The Dissolution of the Lancastrian Kingship* (Stamford: Paul Watkins, 1996), pp. x-xvii (p. xv).
[14] Kevin Sharpe, *Selling the Tudor Monarchy: Authority and Image in Sixteenth Century England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009).
[15] Sharpe, *Selling the Tudor Monarchy*, pp. 51-2.

good kingship, magnates busy at war in France, the rest of the population affected by plague or socio-economic factors, or successful propaganda. It is therefore preferable to assess the esteem with which the monarch was held by using a selection of more measurable parameters: the frequency of uprisings and their grievances; the raising of taxes and support for war. These parameters are by no means exhaustive in gaining an impression of the success of a monarch but rather act as an overall indicator.

It may be useful to expand on the above parameters in terms of definition and scope. First, uprisings, either against the king or those around him were a reflection of the success of his kingship amongst the polity. Second, the raising of taxes together with support for war was indicative of the backing that the king and government had within the realm. The Hundred Years War, as well as requiring large amounts of finance, also provided opportunities for enrichment at a national and personal level. Although moved by patriotism, often as a result of royal propaganda, participants were regularly motivated by the possibility of financial reward from the ransoms and other booty that were part of medieval warfare. The role of the monarch's personality in engaging public support or even leading the campaign had a crucial part to play in the public's reaction to going to war. Before the parameters are examined a brief historiography of each monarch's reign will be undertaken, through contemporaneous sources and also more recent historical analysis, considering the interactions of their personality and propaganda efforts, especially through the issues of uprisings and taxation. A series of case studies will follow providing a deeper examination of these parameters.

Richard II.

As the only child of the Black Prince, Richard was brought up in an environment that was heavily imbued in the chivalric and martial tradition. Unlike his father, however, he was slightly built with a sensitive and pious nature and this is perhaps why he sought to establish his own style of kingship. Richard II tried to change the parameters of recognised English medieval kingship and it was his more autocratic style that aroused so much ill-feeling among his subjects, in particular the magnates. A. R. Myers said of Richard that 'he had a fatal incapacity to judge situations and read men's minds'.[16]

It has long been the accepted view that Richard was very unpopular throughout the kingdom. Much of this opinion was built on a foundation of Lancastrian propaganda which

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[16] A. R. Myers, *England in the Late Middle Ages* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1965), p. 20.

was incorporated into the sources via the 'Record and Process'.[17] Although an invaluable, and often accurate source, the 'Record and Process', sought to exaggerate the negative aspects of Richard's reign in order to justify Bolingbroke's usurpation. Recent work by Christopher Fletcher argues that it was the influence of Arundel's sermon, and the language he used, that affected subsequent interpretations of Richard's character including the 'Record and Process'.[18] Arundel's attack on Richard's lack of masculinity was a theme taken up by not only contemporary commentators but also later historians. Fletcher stresses that as we are unable to assess contemporary views on perceived effeminacy it is difficult to gauge the public perception of Richard in terms of his manhood and ability to fulfil the ideal of kingship.[19]

Although biased towards Richard the *Westminster Chronicle* was not afraid to describe his contrary nature or the repercussions of his decisions. In 1388 the chronicler recalled how Richard acted as a mediator between the duke of York and the duke of Gloucester: 'and after this exchange they would have hurled themselves upon each other had not the king with characteristic mildness and goodwill, been quick to calm them down'.[20] B. F. Harvey suggested that Richard's mood swings may have been a cunning ruse.[21] Chris Given-Wilson felt that Richard's approach to kingship 'had a destabilising effect on the reign and made him too many enemies'.[22]

Richard employed physical propaganda to enforce his own style of kingship and in particular a view of his own supremacy. In 1385 the *Westminster Chronicler* reported: 'in his lust for glory and his eagerness to have from everybody the deference properly due to his kingship, the king allowed the archbishop (of Canterbury) to kneel before him to beg his pardon'.[23] Elevating his presence visually was perhaps Richard's way of trying to assert his

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[17] 'Henry IV: October 1399, Part 1', in *Parliament Rolls of Medieval England*, ed. Chris Given-Wilson, Paul Brand, Seymour Phillips, Mark Ormrod, Geoffrey Martin, Anne Curry and Rosemary Horrox (Woodbridge, 2005), *British History Online* http://www.british-history.ac.uk/no-series/parliament-rolls-medieval/october-1399-pt-1 [accessed 9 August 2016].

[18] Christopher Fletcher, *Richard II: Manhood, Youth and Politics, 1377-99* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), pp. 1-3.

[19] Fletcher, *Richard II*, pp. 4, 11.

[20] *St. Albans, II*, p. 329.

[21] Ibid., p. lxxiv.

[22] *Chronicles of the Revolution*, p. 1.

[23] *Westminster*, p. 139.

kingship whilst he still felt constrained by the influence of those around him.[24] As well as using *visual* media Nigel Saul found that Richard also used language as a means of enhancing his status. Saul felt that the use of flattering vocabulary by Richard was in part to satisfy the theatrical side of his nature and to feed his ego. The objective behind the language was to portray himself as God-like.[25] These examples provide evidence of a dichotomy within Richard's personality. Whilst appearing autocratic and aloof there are suggestions of vulnerability and insecurity in this behaviour.

The murder of Gloucester by Richard in September 1397 destroyed any vestiges of popularity and received universal condemnation. The author of the Julius B II chronicle emphasised the heinous nature of Gloucester's murder: 'and with oute eny answere, or lawe, or processes, pryveley lete him be stranglyd, and unmanly be murdrid'.[26] The death of Gloucester was certainly unpopular with the higher echelons of English society as it must have appeared to them that no-one was safe from the whims of a king exercising his prerogative without restraint. Froissart revealed how much harm the murder did to Richard's standing as shown at a tournament at Windsor:

> but very few lords attended, for at least two-thirds of the English knights and squires were strongly hostile to the king, not only because of the banishment of the earl of Derby and the wrong done to his children, but also because of the murder of the duke of Gloucester at Calais and the execution of the earl of Arundel in London, so that none of the families of those nobles came to the feast. There was almost no-one there.[27]

Periods of his reign were identified as the first and second 'tyranny', immediately suggestive of his style of kingship. Caroline Barron sought to redress the balance in her articles which set out to challenge the influence of hostile propaganda.[28] Barron felt that Richard was

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[24] Fletcher, *Richard II*, p. 96. Fletcher notes that Richard was prevented from establishing his kingship, even in his mid-teens and not being allowed to embark on expeditions, pp. 113.
[25] Nigel Saul, 'Richard II and the Vocabulary of Kingship', *EHR*, CX (1995), 854-77. The use of 'your highness' was meant to emphasise his superiority to his subjects. The increasing use of 'Prince' implied Richard's sovereignty and independent law making capacity. Finally, 'your majesty' reinforced the notion of his God-like image and underlined the sacred nature of his position.
[26] 'Julius B II', in *Chronicles of London*, ed. C. L. Kingsford (Dursley: Alan Sutton, 1977), p. 26.
[27] Froissart, *Chronicles*, ed. G. Brereton (London: Penguin, 1978), p. 440.
[28] C. Barron, 'The Deposition of Richard II', in J. Taylor & W. Childs (eds), *Politics and Crisis in Fourteenth Century England* (Gloucester: Sutton, 1990), pp. 132-49, and 'The Tyranny of Richard II', *BIHR*, XLI (1968), 1-18.

'a king frightened into tyranny'.[29] The verdict against Richard came in many ways from his apparent lack of support during Bolingbroke's invasion. Barron argued, however, that the rapidity of Bolingbroke's invasion and the fact that Richard had the greater part of his retinue with him in Ireland left him at a serious disadvantage 'in the final analysis it was Richard's absence, not his unpopularity, which led men to desert him'.[30] However, Barron was aware of his shortcomings and stated 'Richard saw no reason to love or woo the common man; he never made any attempt to 'sell' his policies; none of the propagandist literature of the reign emanates from a pen deliberately inspired by the king'.[31]

Chris Given-Wilson stated that, in the mid-1390's, there was little contemporary evidence that Richard was receiving any widespread opposition to his rule.[32] If this was the case then it would appear that Richard was ruling in accordance with the norms of accepted kingship by the majority of the population. Gwilym Dodd argued that Richard was successful 'in transforming parliament from an instrument of opposition to a tool of royal power', although he conceded that this was based on 'fear and compulsion' as the result of 'political insecurity' and Richard's weak personality.[33]

The Peasants' Revolt of 1381 was the first rebellion during the minority of Richard II by the commons. It was a direct response by the commons to the imposition of a third poll tax within four years and the objectionable behaviour of the collectors. The rebels were expressing their dissatisfaction with Richard's advisers and in particular John of Gaunt rather than against the king per se. As a fourteen-year-old, Richard showed incredible bravery at Mile End and Smithfield by engaging directly with the rebels in person. Froissart provided a colourful account of Richard's meeting with the rebels: 'he found there a threescore thousand men of divers villages and divers villages and of sundry countries in England, so the king entered in among them and said to them sweetly: "Ah, ye good people, I am your King: what lack ye?"'[34]

His physical presence was his greatest propagandist weapon against the rebels for who

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[29] Barron, 'Tyranny', pp. 17-18.
[30] Barron, 'Deposition of Richard II', p. 138.
[31] Caroline Barron, 'The Art of Kingship: Richard II, 1377-1399', *History Today*, 35 (1985), 30-37 (p. 37).
[32] *Chronicles of the Revolution*, p. 2.
[33] Gwilym Dodd, 'Richard II and the transformation of Parliament', in Gwilym Dodd (ed), *The Reign of Richard II* (Stroud: Tempus Publishing, 2000), pp. 71-84 (p. 84).
[34] B. Dobson, *The Peasants' Revolt of 1381* ([2nd edition] Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1983), p. 192.

would really want to harm the king and second, one who was only a boy? Initially Richard showed great diplomatic skills in dealing with the rebels and was very conciliatory towards them, however, his attitude towards them altered and according to Saul he began to support their repression.[35] This was probably due to the influence of the chancellor, William Courtenay who was not in favour of conciliation and organised a royal visitation to Essex in order to intimidate the rebels through the physical majesty of the king and his retinue.[36] At this stage there is little personal animosity directed at Richard, it is rather at those around him who were ostensibly in charge.

Opposition came closer to Richard with the complaints that he was surrounded by traitors whom he failed to remove. The Appellants who made the claim were Gloucester, Arundel, Warwick, Derby and Nottingham. In 1387 Richard had at first agreed with the appeal of the lords to rid himself of those advisors giving him poor advice but then and not for the first time Richard changed his mind and remained resolutely stubborn: 'at this the members of the council ... worked very hard to moderate to some extent the animosity he entertained towards the lords, but their concern had no effect: he displayed persistent opposition to their purpose'.[37] This was an uprising by a privileged few but was a reflection of their perception that Richard's governance was being ruined by poor counsel the same complaint that the rebels had used in 1381.

In his early years Richard appeared to have been generous in his gifts to people without any forethought as to the origins of the finance: 'having thus handed out his own substance to others, he had perforce to come down on the commons, with the result that the poor are loud in their complaints' so commented the *Westminster Chronicler* in 1386.[38] The Peasants' Revolt had highlighted only too clearly the problem of raising money without antagonising the population. Of the four parliaments that met between November 1381 and February 1383 only one had allowed a grant. The parliaments of 1384 did pass a grant but it was very limited.[39] In the summer of 1384 the French moved the location of the war to Scotland with the arrival of 1,600 men.[40] The summons had resulted in a large turnout which saw Richard at the head of an

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[35] Nigel Saul, *Richard II* p. 76.
[36] Ibid., p. 77.
[37] *Westminster*, p. 217.
[38] Ibid,, p. 162.
[39] Saul, *Richard II*, p. 142.
[40] Ibid., p. 143.

army of 14,000 at the end of July 1385.[41] The army was composed of men who were being paid, those owing feudal service and some with indeterminate reasons.[42] According to Lewis the fact that Richard was leading his first military expedition may well have had an impact on the call to arms. It also provided the opportunity to establish the reputation of Richard who had become regarded as being rather indolent.[43] By the late 1380's and with no success to show for in the war with France the population was losing interest in the campaign. Richard too realised that peace would be beneficial on many levels, especially in reducing the imposition of taxes that was proving so unpopular. In November 1396 a new thirty year truce with France was concluded which allowed Richard to focus on domestic events.

However, by August 1399 respect for Richard was declining, in some quarters, as the *English Chronicle* revealed how Thomas Arundel told Richard how his behaviour had affected the realm: 'thou haste not reuled þi reame and thi peple, but haste spoiled thayme with false reysyngez off taxes and tallagez, not to the profette of thi reame but forto fulfill and satisfie thi cursed covetise and pride'.[44] Arundel's utter condemnation of Richard's reign was correct on many points but was obviously also a bitter outpouring of personal resentment at his own treatment by Richard. Steel noted that in fact Richard's loans were not as 'forced' as believed and this was an impression created by the chroniclers who were writing with Lancastrian prejudice.[45] Barron concurred with Steel that the refusals to pay were quite extensive and concluded that 'the element of force must have been negligible'.[46] Tout emphasised that the Irish expeditions of 1394-5 and 1399 were expensive and accounted for the rise in the wardrobe expenses together with Richard's 'indulgence in generous personal expenditure'.[47]

The pro-Ricardian *Traison et Mort* summed up the mixed feelings towards Richard as he was led through London to the Tower: 'it is true that some pitied him much, and others were exceedingly glad, cursing him loudly in their language, and saying, "Now we are well avenged

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[41] Ibid., p. 144.

[42] N. B. Lewis, 'The Last Medieval Summons of the English Feudal Levy, 13 June 1385', *EHR*, lxxiii (1958), 1-26 (p. 8)

[43] Ibid., p. 11.

[44] *English Chronicle*, p. 23.

[45] Steel, *Receipt of the Exchequer, 1377-1485* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1954), p. 121.

[46] Barron, 'Tyranny', p. 3.

[47] T. F. Tout, *Chapters in the Administrative History of Mediaeval England*, IV (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1928), pp. 206-8.

of this wicked bastard who has governed us so ill"'.[48] As Barron stated Richard 'did not attempt to conciliate but to intimidate'.[49] The evidence would suggest that Barron was correct in her interpretation that it was fear that drove Richard's behaviour and in fact his efforts at taxation were no more onerous than previous monarchs.[50] What was different was that he was followed by an usurper who sought to find justifications for his actions and drew upon Arundel's condemnation of Richard's financial policy and lack of manhood rather than the facts. Richard's failure to establish his kingship in the eyes of his realm was a two-fold problem. First, the influence of those around him in the form of the continual council, whose own interests were paramount and whose lack of confidence in Richard's ability to rule made the situation a self-perpetuating circle of failure. Second, Richard's personality and artistic interests were regarded with suspicion and have formed a major part of traditional view of him being less than chivalric.[51] There was much complaint about the expenditure of his court as Froissart described: 'No King of England before had come within a hundred thousand florins a year of spending as much as he did on the mere upkeep of his court and the pomp that went with it'.[52]

Richard tried to adopt his own version of kingship, based on a continental style, in an attempt to assert his character but this too failed to impress a more traditional English audience who felt that he was too aloof and distant.

Henry IV.

Henry IV became king in controversial circumstances although apparently with popular support. Capgrave described Henry in the following glowing colours:

> For I have known in my time that men of great literary attainments, who used to enjoy intercourse with him, have said that he was a man of very great ability, and of so tenacious a memory that he used to spend a great part of the day in solving and unravelling hard questions.[53]

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[48] *Chronicque de la Traison et Mort de Richart Deux Roy Dengleterre*, ed. B. Williams (London: English Historical Society, 1846), p. 215.

[49] Barron, 'Tyranny', p. 18.

[50] Alison McHardy, 'Richard II: a personal portrait', in Dodd (ed), *The Reign of Richard II*, pp. 11-32. McHardy concurs with Barron that Richard was a king who was 'suspicious and anxious' and lacked confidence, p. 26.

[51] Fletcher, *Richard II*, p. 11. See above, pp. 73-74, 76-77 for a discussion of Richard's use of art to convey his personality and style of kingship.

[52] Froissart, *Chronicles*, p. 469.

[53] *John Capgrave: The Book of Illustrious Henries*, trans., Rev. F. C. Hingeston (London:

As Henry Bolingbroke he had epitomised the chivalric tradition as a knight of honour at home and in both France and Prussia and also had a keen interest in the Crusades and had visited Jerusalem. J. L. Kirby described Henry as charming and friendly as well as accomplished in the arts.[54] Henry's usurpation in 1399 had largely been heralded as a blessing as allegedly the nation could no longer tolerate Richard's supposed tyranny.[55] In defence of Henry's usurpation, especially when judged against his previous exemplary behaviour as a knight and his great popularity, can we believe that it was out of his love for his country that he sought to rid England of Richard II or was it unabashed careerism? McFarlane asserted that Henry was an opportunist who acted out of self-interest and not constitutional principle.[56] Henry had initially only wished to re-claim his inheritance and to rid the court of Richard's favourites, so when he seized the throne it was a surprise even to some of his closest supporters, such as the earls of Northumberland and Westmorland who had made him swear at Doncaster that he would not take the crown.

The *St. Alban's Chronicle* related how Henry dealt with the disagreement between Lord Aumale and other lords that appeared to be descending into a fight at the trial of John Hall in 1399: 'he therefore rose to his feet, and restrained the lords, begging, admonishing, even commanding, that nothing should be undertaken that was contrary to the law'.[57] Henry's methods of quieting the lords showed a mixture of uncertainty in his position as well as the ability to assess the seriousness of the situation. During the early months of his reign Henry was notable for his magnanimity towards Richard's former supporters and their families. In February 1400 Henry issued a general pardon to those who had been involved in the recent uprising.[58]

> And also the king hath ordeyned and graunted to alle his lieges generall pardon off alle
> maner ffelonyes, trespasses, escapes, and alle other except murder, rape off Wymen,

Longman, Brown, Green, Longman and Roberts, 1858), p. 116.

[54] Kirby, *Henry IV* (London: Constable, 1970), pp. 251-252.

[55] Richard's incompetency formed the main thrust of Henry's justification for the usurpation as the propagandist '*Record and Process*' recorded. See above case study, pp. 51-3.

[56] K. B. McFarlane, *Lancastrian Kings and Lollard Knights* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), p. 24.

[57] *St. Albans*, II, p. 261.

[58] Kirby, *Henry IV*, p. 93.

and notorye theffes'.[59]

Whether this was astute *integrational* propaganda or natural clemency is not known. A. L. Brown believed that Henry's actions were a mixture of necessity, insecurity and his liberality rather than a coherent policy of engendering support.[60] In other words it would suggest that he was being reactive rather than proactive. Henry's attitude towards his kingship, at the start of his reign, was in stark contrast to that of Richard, 'his approach was collegial, and he accepted debate and criticism in parliament'.[61] Henry's conciliar approach to his kingship was revealed early in his reign by the *St. Albans Chronicle*: 'in order to ascertain more clearly the whole truth of the matter in the information laid before him, so that he might arrive at the best and most equitable judgement'.[62]

The pivotal moment in Henry's reign was the series of rebellions 1403-5 connected with the machinations of the Percy family. Henry appeared to lose his measured approach to his rule, the culmination of which was manifested in his use of *physical* propaganda, with the execution of Archbishop Scrope in 1405.[63] From this point on Henry suffered from ill health that continued throughout the rest of his reign which had a serious impact on his ability to rule during the second half of his reign, particularly during the Long Parliament of 1406.[64] Bennett emphasised the impact that his illness had on the public's perception of him 'that his sickness was seen as a reflection on the moral legitimacy of his rule'.[65]

Henry's early popularity was reflected in the response to a proclamation in June 1400 to the sheriff of York and other counties and the palatine of Lancaster, to raise troops:

> To the sheriff of York. Order under pain of forfeiture upon sight etc. to cause proclamation to be made on the king's behalf, that all knights, esquires and yeomen ...

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[59] 'Julius B II', in *Chronicles of London*, ed. C. L. Kingsford (Dursley: Alan Sutton, 1077), p. 62.

[60] A. L. Brown, 'The Reign of Henry IV', in S. B. Chrimes, C. D. Ross & R. A. Griffiths (eds), *Fifteenth Century England 1399-1509* (Stroud: Alan Sutton, 1995), pp. 1-28 (p. 20).

[61] Michael Bennett, 'Henry IV, the Royal Succession and the Crisis of 1406', in Dodd and Biggs (eds), *The Reign of Henry IV*, pp. 9-27 (p. 13).

[62] *St. Albans*, II, p. 271.

[63] See above for Henry's use of *physical* propaganda as a method of *integration* at times of conflict, p. 83.

[64] Douglas Biggs, 'An Ill and Infirm King: Henry IV, Health, and the Gloucester Parliament of 1407', in Gwilym Dodd and Douglas Biggs (eds), *The Reign of Henry IV: Rebellion and Survival, 1403-1413* (Woodbridge: A York Medieval Press publication in association with the Boydell Press, 2008), pp. 180-209 (pp. 185-186).

[65] Bennett, 'Henry IV', in Dodd and Biggs (eds), *The Reign of Henry IV*, pp. 9-27 (p. 15).

shall under pain of losing their fees etc. make haste and draw to the king's presence at York or elsewhere, ... furnished and arrayed for war with armour, horses and otherwise, every man as his estate requires, to march with the king on his service to Scotland for defence of the realm.[66]

The Scottish campaign of August 1400 saw Henry raise an army of 13,085 soldiers, one of the largest raised in the period suggesting that the above proclamation had been successful.[67] Henry's financial restrictions meant that the majority of this army was recruited from both royal retainers and the duchy of Lancaster and a single payment rather than indenture was given to the retinue leaders.[68] A. L. Brown believed that Henry's inability to find a compromise between prudent fiscal policy and financial reward was a major cause of discontent.[69]

In 1401 Usk reported on the unpopularity of Henry's new taxation: 'in this parliament and convocation the clergy granted the king a tenth and a half, and the people granted him a fifteenth of all their goods, as well as two shillings from each tun of wine and eight pence from twenty shillings' worth of other merchandise, albeit with much ill will and dark mutterings by both clergy and people'.[70] This was blatantly a reversal of Henry's promise at the start of his reign not to tax the nation and thus a perceived failure of good kingship. The condition that Henry had to accept, to amend his administration, was a strong indication that his choice of ministers was not approved of by the commons.[71] A case heard before King's Bench in 1402 highlighted the growing dissatisfaction with Henry's reign and his perceived misuse of finance.[72]

However, in 1403 Henry managed to extract a grant of a tenth and a half tax from the

[66] From: 'Close Rolls, Henry IV: June 1400', Calendar of Close Rolls, Henry IV: volume 1: 1399-1402 (1927), pp. 189-194. URL: http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=107809 Date accessed: 09 November 2014.
[67] Anne Curry, Adrian R. Bell, Andy King, David Simpkin, 'New Régime, New Army? Henry IV's Scottish Expedition of 1400', *EHR*, CXXV (2010), 1382-1413 (p. 1382).
[68] Curry *et al.*, 'New Régime', p. 1383.
[69] Brown, 'Reign of Henry IV', p. 24.
[70] *Usk*, p. 127.
[71] A. J. Pollard, *Late Medieval England 1399-1509* (Harlow: Pearson Education Ltd, 2000), p. 33.
[72] *Select Cases in the Court of the King's Bench under Richard II, Henry IV and Henry V*, Selden Society, VII, 88 (1971), p. 123. 'And she further said that the king had not kept his covenant with his commons, for at his entry to England he promised them that they would be discharged and quit of all kinds of payments and customs save for his wars overseas, but in the meanwhile he has collected much wealth from his commons and did nothing with it to the profit of the realm but only of all his lords and many other gentlemen'.

clergy, a fifteenth from the commons and a tenth from the townsmen without opposition.[73] Henry used much of this revenue for his household and by 1404 the commons were complaining vociferously:

> And because of these unneccessary expenses and several others, and because of the many gifts of castles, lands and lordships, and of annuities, which have been made and given unduly and unwisely, and especially because of the great costs and expenses of the king's household.[74]

The aftermath of Shrewsbury and now this opposition from the Commons show how Henry's initial popularity soon waned. The Commons were not giving Henry any leeway and there was acrimony between them.[75] By agreeing to examine royal grants the king was able to persuade the parliament of October 1404 to grant two full tenths and fifteenths for war expenditure as well as tonnage and poundage and the wool subsidy.[76] This was the result of Henry's acquiescence in the face of a severe financial crisis that revealed a lack of persuasive charm on his part.

The ongoing disturbances in Wales were absorbing large amounts of revenue and man power during the reign. Helen Watt demonstrated that the issues facing Henry with regard to raising taxation to defend the Welsh borders from Glyn Dŵr's rebellion posed a double financial problem to Henry.[77] In order to defend the border he needed to raise taxes but due to the economic devastation caused by Glyn Dŵr the local population was unable to meet the requests for these taxes. The main counties affected were Cheshire, Shropshire and Herefordshire who had also provided troops to support both Henry Percy and the Prince of Wales and therefore had few men to defend their home border or to pay their taxes.[78] Watt emphasised that although a large number of taxes were granted there was a concurrent rise in exemptions, the emphasis being placed on the economic impact caused by the Welsh

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[73] *St. Albans*, II, pp. 339-41.
[74] 'Henry IV: January 1404', in *Parliament Rolls of Medieval England*, ed. Chris Given-Wilson, Paul Brand, Seymour Phillips, Mark Ormrod, Geoffrey Martin, Anne Curry and Rosemary Horrox (Woodbridge, 2005), *British History Online* http://www.british-history.ac.uk/no-series/parliament-rolls-medieval/january-1404 [accessed 30 March 2018].
[75] See Given-Wilson, *Henry IV*, pp. 281- 301.
[76] Chris Given-Wilson, *The Royal Household and the King's Affinity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986), p. 129.
[77] Helen Watt, '"On Account of the Frequent Attacks and Invasions of the Welsh": The Effect of the Glyn Dŵr Rebellion on Tax Collection in England', in Dodd and Biggs (eds), *Reign of Henry IV*, pp. 48-81.
[78] Watt, '"On Account"', p. 53.

incursions.[79] As a result of the above problems Henry IV appears to have been unsuccessful in raising much needed taxes in this region. Henry's early years were beset by financial insolvency which he personally failed to remedy through either effective propaganda or personal charm. Although he had extensively cited Richard's financial shortcomings in the 'Record and Process' he had failed to remedy the very same complaints in the early part of his reign.

Upon his death Usk described Henry's rule thus: 'after fourteen years of powerful rule during which he had crushed all those who rebelled against him'.[80] Henry's securing of the throne for the following two generations was an indication of his ability to exercise good kingship despite his weak genealogical claim and periods of ill health. This may have been due to his personality or perhaps, as Pollard stated, it was the men who served him who 'were remarkable, in their capacity ultimately to put the collective interest of the new dynasty, the crown and the realm before their personal interests or ambitions'.[81] Implicit in Pollard's statement is the suggestion that these men around Henry respected him enough not only to support the new dynasty but also not to remove him. This probably says much for his personality at the start of his reign, combined with his adherence to traditional kingship, which carried him through his later years.

Henry V.

> 'The posthumous Henry, the medieval hero-king, must obviously be distinguished from the Henry of strictly contemporary record'.[82]

The above caution from E. F. Jacob deserves serious consideration. Perhaps more than any other English king, Henry V has been portrayed as the epitome of kingship. In order that Henry could pursue his French aims it was going to be necessary for him to restore domestic harmony. As the victor at Agincourt he restored English pride and became a legend in his own lifetime and even more so afterwards. Henry more fully fitted the medieval ideal of a good king by defending the realm and church, upholding justice and providing good governance and financial management. At last with Henry V the nation had a king who could fulfil their

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[79] Ibid., p. 53.
[80] *Usk*, p. 243.
[81] A. J. Pollard, 'Introduction', in Gwilym Dodd and Douglas Biggs (eds), *The Reign of Henry IV: Rebellion and Survival, 1403-1413* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2008), pp. 1-8 (p. 3).
[82] E. F. Jacob, *The Fifteenth Century 1399-1485* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1969), p. 122.

aspirations and who appeared both eager and capable of doing so. The enduring popular image created by Shakespeare, via Holinshed, has tended to romanticize Henry's life. The author of the *Gesta Henrici Quinti* described Henry as 'young in years but old in experience', and although not that young, being in his mid-twenties, the author was emphasising Henry's experience in Wales and his fitness to rule.[83] After his death Walsingham described him as the epitome of medieval kingship: 'he was a man of sincere piety, sparing and discreet in word, wise in judgement, modest in his looks but magnificent in action'.[84]

His reign was not without its problems in the early years as seen in the abortive Southampton Plot of 1415, and indeed by the time of his death, whisperings of discontent were being voiced in 1421: 'the unbearable impositions being demanded from the people to this end are accompanied by dark-though- private-mutterings and curses, and by hatred of such extortions'. Usk was referring to the high level of taxation required for the French campaign.[85] Pugh described Henry as 'cold and singularly lacking in generosity' and although he was recognised for his upholding of justice Pugh claimed he was also capable of less than equitable behaviour.[86] Upon becoming king Henry's behaviour apparently changed not inconsiderably from youthful exuberance: 'and before he was king, when he was Prince of Wales, he fell and inclined greatly to riot, and drew to wild company', to the maturity required to be king.[87] Anne Curry questioned whether he would always remain an enigma in terms of his real personality.[88]

In order to determine whether Henry's hero-image was the result of conscious propaganda, either produced by himself or his contemporaries, or a true reflection of his actions it is necessary to briefly examine some of the available sources. Antonia Gransden said that 'no other medieval king of England was honoured with such an abundance of literature'.[89] Even the earliest sources appear to provide only a complimentary picture of Henry. It appeared that

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[83] *Gesta Henrici Quinti*, pp. 12-13.

[84] *St. Albans*, II, p. 773.

[85] *Usk*, p. 271. See above, pp. 90-1, for the success of Henry's 1421 tour to raise funds and quell unrest, a reflection of both his personality and use of *physical* propaganda.

[86] T. B. Pugh, *Henry V and the Southampton Plot of 1415*, Southampton Record Series, XXX (Southampton: University Press, 1988), p. 139. See also above for *visual* propaganda, pp. 93-4.

[87] 'The Brut Chronicle', cited in A. R. Myers (ed.), *English Historical Documents 1327-1485* (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1969), p. 207.

[88] Anne Curry (ed.), *Agincourt 1415: Henry V, Sir Thomas Erpingham and the Triumph of the English Archers* (Stroud: Tempus Publishing, 2000), p. 11.

[89] Antonia Gransden, *Historical Writing in England: c.1307 to early Sixteenth Century* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1982), p. 196.

even from early on in his reign everyone hoped that Henry would be a 'great' king and the literature reflected this by portraying him as the ideal monarch. Poets such as John Page and the author of the *Agincourt Carol* glorified Henry's achievements in France. Henry was astute enough to realise that he needed the support of the nation if he was to fulfil his dream of obtaining the French crown and to this end he was prepared to use a variety of propagandist methods including the *Gesta Henrici Quinti* which will be discussed in a case study below.[90]

As mentioned above Henry's reign was not without its challenges as seen in 1415. The Southampton Plot, on the eve of his departure to France, was a potentially serious threat and this was reflected in the charges brought against the main conspirators, Richard, earl of Cambridge, Henry, Lord Scrope of Masham and Sir Thomas Gray of Heaton.[91]

They were undeniably guilty of conspiring to make Edmund, earl of March defect from Henry by launching him from a Welsh base in order to take the throne for himself. However, the accusation below sought to condemn them to death:

> …falsely and treasonably proposing and plotting finally to destroy and kill the same present lord king and Thomas duke of Clarence, John duke of Bedford, and Humphrey duke of Gloucester, his brothers, as well as other lords, magnates and faithful lieges of the said present lord king, contrary to their oath of allegiance.[92]

This second charge, that they intended to murder Henry and members of his family, was according to T. B. Pugh carefully devised to ensure that there could be no acquittal.[93] This use of propaganda by Henry was an astute political move to rid himself of any opposition before he embarked for France.

The revolt by the Lollard, Sir John Oldcastle, posed a political and religious dilemma for Henry as he was a personal friend and had up to 1413 been a loyal Lancastrian. Oldcastle's plan to kidnap Henry and his brothers was discovered and although he was convicted he subsequently escaped. Henry appeared to waiver in his treatment of the rebels, vacillating

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[90] See below, pp. 143, 145. Also see discussion above, pp. 48-9.

[91] This plot is discussed further in Chapter IV with regard to its Northern connections, p. 183.

[92] 'Henry V: November 1415', in *Parliament Rolls of Medieval England*, ed. Chris Given-Wilson, Paul Brand, Seymour Phillips, Mark Ormrod, Geoffrey Martin, Anne Curry and Rosemary Horrox (Woodbridge, 2005), *British History Online* http://www.british-history.ac.uk/no-series/parliament-rolls-medieval/november-1415 [accessed 24 February 2018].

[93] Pugh, *Henry V*, p. 130. This concurs with Maureen Jurkowski's premise that Henry was willing to manipulate the law, see below, p. 124, n. 96.

between executing or pardoning them.[94] In October Henry issued a proclamation forbidding anyone to assist Oldcastle: 'Writ to the Sheriffs to make proclamation forbidding all intercourse with, or help to be given to, John Oldecastell, Knt., who had been committed to the Tower as a heretic, but who had broken prison'.[95]

This had little effect as did Arundel's sending copies of Oldcastle's conviction for heresy to the bishops to read out in English at church and his public excommunication of Oldcastle at St. Paul's Cross. In fact Jurkowski believed that these actions were counter-productive as support for Oldcastle apparently increased.[96] It was not until December 1417 that he was finally caught and executed and Lollardy retreated from the public consciousness. In dealing with Oldcastle Jurkowski felt that Henry manipulated the common law for his own benefit and revealed 'even less respect for his subjects; it is not what we would expect from an "exemplar of justice"'.[97] This suggests that had Henry spent more time at home he may have come into conflict with the judiciary, as he exerted his personality over the legal system. In this example his personality was not enough to deal with Oldcastle, neither was the propaganda issued by Arundel, but of course Henry was already in France and had a much bigger and more successful propaganda campaign to deal with. Henry's raising of both taxes and manpower will be looked at in a case study below.[98]

It appeared that Henry's determination to fulfil the ideal of medieval kingship and this almost professional attitude to the role, allowed his own personality to recede into the background although it could be argued that he had exactly the right personality for being a king. Katherine Lewis argued that Henry's careful construction of his 'manhood' was a political response to the situation he found himself in.[99] It is possible that Henry may have seen how Richard II's image, in terms of his lack of masculinity, had been manipulated and sought to avoid the same outcome. As a result, this has left scant evidence with which to discern the

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[94] Ibid., p. 62.
[95] 'Folios cxxi - cxxx: March 1412-13 - ', in *Calendar of Letter-Books of the City of London: I, 1400-1422*, ed. Reginald R Sharpe (London, 1909), pp. 111-122. *British History Online* http://www.british-history.ac.uk/london-letter-books/voli/pp111-122 [accessed 31 July 2016].
[96] Maureen Jurkowski, 'Henry V's Suppression of the Oldcastle Revolt', in Gwilym Dodd (ed.), *Henry V: New Interpretations* (Woodbridge: York Medieval Press in association with the Boydell Press, 2013), pp. 103-29 (p. 107). See above, n. 93.
[97] Ibid., p. 129.
[98] See below, pp. 142-6.
[99] Katherine J. Lewis, *Kingship and Masculinity in Late Medieval England* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2013), pp. 52-3.

man behind the myth that both contemporary and near-contemporary propaganda sought to represent. As has been shown by the end of Henry V's illustrious, but short reign there were murmurings of discontent which had to be addressed by the next generation of Lancastrian kings.

<u>Henry VI.</u>

Henry VI has been portrayed variously from the ineffectual to the vindictive during his lifetime, the reason for the outbreak of the Wars of the Roses and posthumously as a saint. Griffiths contended that 'Henry VI had been transformed, by a remarkable exercise in posthumous propaganda, from an incompetent innocent into a guileless saint'.[100] This is suggestive of a highly complex character or maybe a misunderstood monarch?

Henry, of all the kings, had the hardest act to follow and his long regency failed to prepare him for kingship. His personality lacked the robustness of his father and he appeared to be overpowered by either his uncles in his early reign and by his queen at the end. Despite this the general populace tolerated him and rather placed any blame for any misgovernance on his advisors. The main opposition to Henry came from within his extended family, rather than the general population. The Commons resentment of his imprudent patronage resulted in their refusal to grant taxes for much of his reign. This was a clear reflection of Henry's weak personality and his regime's inability to employ effective propaganda in order to overcome the Common's opposition. Trying to determine the personality of Henry VI and his popularity in the eyes of the nation is more complex than the previous monarchs examined mainly due to the sheer length of his reign. Recent historians such as Watts and Gross have led the way in the discussion about Henry's kingship.[101]

One of the few sources that appeared to give any insight into the personality of Henry VI was Blacman.[102] He described Henry as 'a simple man, without any crook of craft or untruth' and 'he was both upright and just'.[103] As a political source it was weak and was

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[100] R. A. Griffiths, *Henry VI* (Stroud: Alan Sutton, 1998), p. 6.
[101] See Watts, *Henry VI* and Anthony Gross, *The Dissolution of the Lancastrian Kingship* (Stamford: Paul Watkins, 1996). The debate on kingship between Watts and Gross was centred on the importance of the personality of Henry VI. Gross saw the personal will of the monarch as crucial whereas Watts looked more closely at the ideological and institutional context.
[102] *Henry the Sixth: A Reprint of John Blacman's Memoir*, ed. M. R. James (Cambridge, 1919).
[103] Ibid., p. 26.

intended to focus on the religiosity of the king and as Roger Lovatt said 'Blacman does not tell us what we want to know, but what he wants us to know'.[104] Looking at contemporary sources, direct criticism of Henry VI was rare, rather it was those around him who were regarded suspiciously. Warkworth commented how the actions of those around Henry made 'the peple to gruge ageyns hym, and alle bycause of his fals lords, and nevere of hym'.[105]

The young Henry VI unfortunately had few of his father's attributes and little interest in his kingly duties. Katherine Lewis regarded Henry's lack of masculinity as having adversely affected his kingship.[106] His continuing lack of interest prolonged the rule of the council and the increasing influence of characters such as Suffolk. It was a difficult situation as the members of the council could not publicly declare that the young king showed no aptitude to rule and yet they were regarded as perpetuating their own self- interest at the expense of the crown. Henry's accession was therefore welcomed in the belief that court interests would be diminished with the king in control. Wolffe regarded Henry's failure to uphold justice and his partisan approach to dealing with quarrels as the reason for much of the unrest among the nobility. Wolffe also stated the qualities required by a king to fulfil these duties included 'charisma, as well as energetic, strategic personal intervention', attributes that Henry failed either to possess or certainly to display.[107]

Henry VI's inheritance at first glance looked impressive following the success in France by his father, however, to maintain this position was to be a costly exercise, one that the public were on occasion less than happy to sustain. England during the minority of Henry VI experienced an economic downturn that led to a financial crisis resulting in the imposition of special taxation three times during the period 1428 and 1436 for defence. It was under this financial cloud and popular opposition that Henry came to the throne whilst maintaining the commitment to France.[108] Ormrod stated that the financial backing was too onerous for parliament to continue to support.[109] The ongoing crises in France provided a constant need for

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[104] Roger Lovatt, 'A Collector of Apochryphal Anecdotes: John Blacman Revisited', in Tony Pollard (ed.), *Property and Politics: Essays in Later Medieval English History* (Gloucester: Alan Sutton, 1984), pp. 172-97 (p. 182).

[105] Warkworth, p. 12.

[106] Lewis, *Kingship and Masculinity*, p. 55.

[107] Wolffe, *Henry VI*, pp. 116-117.

[108] Griffiths, *Henry VI*, p. 109.

[109] Mark Ormrod, 'The Domestic Response to the Hundred Years War', in Anne Curry and Michael Hughes (eds), *Arms, Armies and Fortifications in the Hundred Years War* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1994), pp. 83-101 (p. 96).

the crown to justify their expenditure and to raise morale and thus the possibility of further funding. On 3 July 1436 Henry VI used a proclamation to stir up the commons against the threat of the duke of Burgundy taking Calais:

> as he who calls himself duke of Burgundy, the king's enemy and rebel,… making disposition to take the town of Calais and all fortresses in the marches,…and should this happen it would tend not only to scandal and reproach of the king, but also to the hurt and disgrace of both his realms of France and England, and his will is to resist the malice of the so called duke.[110]

Henry by referring to the duke as 'he who calls himself duke of Burgundy' further creating the impression of illegality and immorality of the duke's actions and implying the legal justification for English action, just as his father had. This resulted in the largest army of the decade under the duke of York setting sail from England.[111] The Patent Rolls record: 'the muster of Richard, duke of York, and of 500 men at arms and 2200 archers who are about to proceed to France'.[112]

Although the parliament of 1437 granted a tenth and a fifteenth, little was forthcoming as economic factors meant that many exemptions were requested on the grounds of poverty.[113] Griffiths speculated that Henry's extravagance may have contributed to more exemptions from both the lay and clerical communities.[114] The 1440's saw little improvement in the relationship between Henry and the Commons with the 1445 parliament granting only a half-tenth and fifteenth and in 1447 no financial grant was passed. It would appear that the Londoners and the merchants in particular were being exceedingly obdurate and with this in mind Henry adjourned parliament to Winchester.[115] This resulted in the granting of a further half tenth and fifteenth along with the imposition of taxation on aliens and unbeneficed clergy. These two groups highlighted the parlous state of both Henry's finances and public perception in as much as it revealed he had to tax these two minority groups who were less likely to oppose the taxation. Harriss stated 'the commissioners who met local worthies in the Chapter House at York in 1446 managed to secure only four loans from those present, and in Southampton in the same year, although fifteen appeared of the twenty summoned, again only four contributed.

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[110] *CCR,1435-1441*, p. 69.
[111] Griffiths, *Henry VI*, p. 201.
[112] *CPR, 1429-26*, p. 535.
[113] Griffiths, *Henry VI*, pp. 378-9.
[114] Ibid., p. 379.
[115] Ibid., p. 380.

We must conclude, then, that lending was unpopular and often evaded'.[116]

At the Leicester parliament in April 1450 the Commons determined that Henry should cancel all grants made since the start of his reign as Henry's ill-judged patronage was a reflection of his inability to fulfil the perception of good kingship. Henry accepted the bill of resumption in May and although there were a number of exemptions a second bill was passed in 1451. The loss of Normandy in 1449 highlighted the urgent need for financial support to avoid the same fate happening to Calais, although parliament did not meet again until March 1453. However, the aid came too late and although the Reading parliament of 1453 was willing to make substantial grants the situation in France was beyond recovery. The rapidly deteriorating situation in Lancastrian France in 1453 led parliament to a large-scale commission of array in order to raise 20,000 archers to defend the country. Unlike previous commissions whereby the motivation was the traditional obligation to defend the kingdom, this was based on the payment of wages. It appeared that Henry had been planning to tour around the country, suggesting that his appearance as a manifestation of *physical* propaganda was still considered beneficial in maintaining law and order:

> that it had been arranged for him himself to travel to various parts of the realm to the intention and end that maintenance, extortion, oppression, riots and other misdeeds accustomed in his realm of England for so long a time might be destroyed and the doers or perpetrators of the same be punished.[117]

Despite the scale of the French losses there was a revival of patriotic spirit which resulted in the Commons granting a full tenth and fifteenth and further grants in 1454.[118] It was also at this point that Henry descended into a state of mental breakdown and ostensibly was no longer in charge.

As John Watts stated above despite the grumblings and the apparent support of other rival players Henry VI still managed to remain on the throne - it is perhaps indicative that because he was so distant from affairs that he was indeed regarded as blameless. The influence and control of Henry by the French Margaret of Anjou fuelled his unpopularity and his poor mental health left him in a vulnerable position. Henry's feeble appearance in his old blue gown

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[116] Harriss, 'Aids, Loans', p. 16.
[117] 'Henry VI: March 1453', in *Parliament Rolls of Medieval England*, ed. Chris Given-Wilson, Paul Brand, Seymour Phillips, Mark Ormrod, Geoffrey Martin, Anne Curry and Rosemary Horrox (Woodbridge, 2005), *British History Online* http://www.british-history.ac.uk/no-series/parliament-rolls-medieval/march-1453 [accessed 30 March 2018].
[118] Griffiths, *Henry VI*, p. 382.

on Maundy Thursday in 1471 confirmed in the eyes of the audience his unsuitability to rule, he did not look or behave as a medieval king was expected to.[119] His weak personality left him open to the influence of those around him which resulted in the misguided policies that dogged his reign and his apparent failure to engage in propaganda successfully led him being deposed twice. A case study below will survey various uprisings during Henry's reign.[120]

Edward IV.

Polydore Vergil described the first Yorkist in glowing terms:

> for Edwarde was much desired of the Londoners, in favor with the common people, in the mouth and speeche of every man, of highest and lowest he had the good willes. He was, for his liberalitie, clemencie, integritie, and fortitude, praysed generally of all men above the skyes.[121]

Commines was less effusive when he declared that: 'King Edward was not an outstanding man but a very handsome prince..., and he was very courageous'.[122] From the above it appears that Edward IV was the antithesis of his predecessor, Henry VI. He was physically vigorous and handsome, charming, an able administrator with a prodigious memory and not overly pious. Did these qualities enable him to fulfil the criteria for a successful medieval king? That question has long divided historians in their assessment of Edward IV. Certainly, he used his attractiveness to the opposite sex to great political effect in 1471 as Commines recorded: 'several noblewomen and wives of rich citizens with whom he had been closely and secretly acquainted won over their husbands and relatives to his cause' which allowed Edward to enter London and escape Warwick.[123]

Late nineteenth century historians such as Gairdner, Stubbs and Oman and later Scofield, all concurred in their condemnation of Edward as an inadequate and immoral king, a judgement based very much on the morals of their age. Later historians have taken a less judgemental approach to their study of both the king and the times in which he lived. Historians that include Ross, Carpenter, Lander, Hicks, Pollard and Horrox have all brought their own interpretation to the period. Christine Carpenter has revived Edward's image in a favourable light whilst Colin Richmond has been more critical, like the earlier historians. Ralph Griffiths,

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[119] See above, pp. 94-5, for a fuller analysis of this event.
[120] See below, p. 136.
[121] Polydore Vergil, *Historie of England*, CS, old series, XXIX (1844), p. 110.
[122] *Philippe De Commynes Memoirs: The Reign of Louis XI 1461–83*, trans. Michael Jones (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1972), p. 184.
[123] *Philippe De Commynes,* p. 194.

Keith Dockray and Anthony Pollard have taken a more neutral attitude towards the reign.[124]

Charles Ross described Edward's style of kingship as pragmatic and conservative.[125] Edward began his reign with a policy of magnanimity towards many Lancastrians that was later to prove costly.[126] This may have been due to his generous nature but perhaps he realised that as the Lancastrian lords far outnumbered the Yorkists, *integration* propaganda was required to enlist their support as the Yorkist régime was based on very slender foundations.[127] As an usurper he needed to appear in contrast to Henry VI, whose weak kingship had allowed the House of York to seize the throne.

Edward was a complex character as described by Mancini: 'Edward was of a gentle nature and cheerful aspect: nevertheless should he assume an angry countenance he could appear very terrible to beholders'.[128] A Milanese merchant reported on the popularity of Edward: 'I am unable to declare how well the commons love and adore him, as if he were their God' and in April 1461 Francesco Coppini wrote that: 'this new king is young, prudent and magnanimous'[129] Later in August 1461 another Italian, Giovanni Pietro Cagnolla wrote of the importance of Warwick in securing Edward's success and the fact that the majority of the people, certainly in the North, were probably more disposed towards Henry VI: 'seeing at their backs the Earl of Warwick, …,those people would have joined King Henry…, but Warwick has prevented this'.[130] Although Edward had seized the throne in an apparently 'popular' move this quotation reveals that his support was not universal.

Edward's popularity was waning towards the end of his first reign in the summer of 1469 as the *Coventry Leet Book* noted: 'Kyng Edward laye at Notynham and sende for lordes and all other men, but ther com so lytell pepull to hym that he was not abyll to make a fylde a-

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[124] Michael Hicks, *Edward IV* (London: Arnold, 2004). For a comprehensive examination of the historiography see in particular chapters 4 & 5.

[125] Charles Ross, *Edward IV* (London: Methuen, 1974), p. 299.

[126] Ross, *Edward IV*, p. 65.

[127] Ibid., p. 70.

[128] Mancini, p. 65.

[129] *Calendar of State Papers & Manuscripts, Relating to English Affairs, existing in the Archives & Collections of Venice & in other Libraries of Northern Italy, 1202-1509*, vol. 1, ed. Rawdon Brown (Longman: London,1864) p. 105; *Calendar of State Papers and Manuscripts existing in the archives and collections of Milan*, ed. Allen B. Hinds (London: HMSO, 1912), p. 69.

[130] *Calendar of State Papers Venetian 1202-1509*, vol. 1, London, 1864, pp. 110-11.

gaynes hem [Warwick and Clarence]'. [131] Carpenter argued that it was not a personal failure by Edward that he lost support and ultimately the throne, rather a 'structural problem' in the survival by Henry VI.[132] Once Henry VI and Warwick were dead Edward's position was more secure and he could continue his reign with confidence. His use of literary propaganda as seen in the 'Official Histories' of the *Arrivall* and the *Rebellion* helped to discredit Warwick and legitimise his position.[133]

Edward's first reign had made him realise that his easy-going attitude and magnanimity had only resulted in rebellion and as a result his kingship evolved into a more imperious style. After the death of Clarence the *Crowland Chronicle* described Edward as having changed as he: 'exercised his office so haughtily thereafter that he seemed to be feared by all his subjects while he himself feared no man'.[134] This was also reflected in his adoption of the Burgundian style of appearance, as seen at Christmas 1482, 'very often dressed in a variety of the costliest clothes very different in style from what used to be seen hitherto in our time'.[135] The removal of Lancastrian and familial unrest left him determined to be in control of the realm on his own terms and he had no apparent need to acquiesce to anyone else.

Taxation and support for war during Edward's reign will be the subject of a case study below.[136]

Richard III.

As one of England's most infamous kings, Richard III's career and life has been forever shaped by Shakespeare's portrayal of him as a hunchback and monster has for centuries obscured his natural capabilities as an extremely able administrator, a courageous soldier and a loyal lord.

However, in the light of the recent discovery of Richard's skeleton in Leicester and the post-mortem confirmation of scoliosis, a curvature of the spine, it would appear that the depiction of a hunchback was closer to the truth than previously thought but would this also confirm his black character as well?

The fact that he was king for just over two years means that to gain an impression of

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[131] *John Vale's Book*, p. 49.
[132] Carpenter, *The Wars of the Roses*, p. 181.
[133] See above, pp. 39-40.
[134] *Crowland*, p. 147.
[135] Ibid., p. 149.
[136] See below, p. 146.

his personality, his earlier years need to be examined. In his article on Richard as duke of Gloucester, Hicks identified the problem of trying to discover Richard's personality.[137] As duke of Gloucester he exhibited formidable skill in establishing his vast estates which Hicks stated that he achieved through 'careful preparation, opportunism, flexibility in tactics, and utter unscrupulousness and ruthlessness in execution'.[138] He was forgiving of the past misdeeds of rivals and regarded as a good lord and patron.[139] To this end Richard appeared to be no different to many of his contemporaries in being desirous of enlarging and protecting his land holdings whilst upholding the notion of good lordship. Hicks took the premise that Richard would not have expected to have ever become king.[140] Nothing in his career as duke suggested that he was entertaining the notion of one day seizing the throne; the empire that he had constructed was firmly rooted in the North. Interestingly Hicks said that Richard 'was independent rather than subservient in politics', suggesting that he was very much his own man.[141] If he did adopt such an attitude of separateness from the political hub then he was at a great disadvantage from being able to call on the support of those at the centre which made his decision to seize the throne all the more curious.

Ross regarded Richard's piety as genuine and not just for public show but also stated that this did not mean that he was incapable of political chicanery or violent behaviour.[142] Although undeniably courageous and at times generous he did not have the charm that his brother Edward IV had had. Richard lacked the skill to 'work' the larger audience possessed by his brother. Rosemary Horrox said of Richard III:

> it would be ... unrealistic to ignore Richard's unpopularity altogether. The fact that he generated opposition among men with little material reason for dissent, and that the disaffection then continued to spread among his own associates, says something about what contemporaries regarded as the acceptable parameters of political behaviour.[143]

Whilst Edward had been alive Richard lived in the North free from the intriguing of the Woodvilles but his fear that they could potentially take away what he had spent years building

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[137] M. A. Hicks, *Richard III as Duke of Gloucester: A Study in Character*, Borthwick Paper, 70 (York: University of York, 1986).
[138] Hicks, *Richard III as Duke*, p. 15.
[139] Ibid., p. 19.
[140] Ibid., p. 3.
[141] Ibid., p. 31.
[142] Charles Ross, *Richard III* (London: Methuen, 1981), pp. 128-9 (p. 136).
[143] R. Horrox, *Richard III: A Study in Service* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), p. 327.

up, combined with his isolation from the political world of London, acted as a catalyst for him to make the disastrous move of seizing the throne. Mancini wrote of Richard as duke of Gloucester:

> The good reputation of his private life and public activities powerfully attracted the esteem of strangers. Such was his renown in warfare, that whenever a difficult and dangerous policy had to be undertaken, it would be entrusted to his discretion and generalship. By these arts Richard acquired the favour of the people…[144]

Mancini here portrayed a man greatly respected both militarily and morally. Later Mancini cited that in Richard's attempt to persuade the young king Edward that he, his uncle, was best placed to be in charge of the country, Richard refers to both his: 'experience of affairs, but also his popularity'.[145] When the rumours of the deaths of his nephews began to circulate it was 'for whiche cause he lost the hertes of the people. And therupon many Gentilmen entendid his distruccion', including the duke of Buckingham.[146]

In the autumn of 1483 less than four months into his reign Richard encountered a significant rebellion apparently led by the duke of Buckingham, his once staunch ally. In fact there were a series of rebellions across the south of England that were independent of the influence of Henry Stafford, duke of Buckingham.[147] The common thread between the rebels was their allegiance to Edward IV and by implication, his heirs. Richard's failure to disprove the rumours that the princes were dead meant that the rationale for rebellion in October had changed from the desire to restore Edward V to the removal of Richard by Henry Tudor.

From the attainders it would appear that the duke found little support from Wales and the Marches.[148] Buckingham had failed to raise any support in his opposition to Richard. Richard's response was to issue a proclamation that stated that anyone amongst the yeoman and commoners who put down their arms would receive a free pardon. The leaders, however, were meted out a harsher treatment as they had prices put upon their heads.[149] This appeared to have the desired effect and Buckingham was captured in Shropshire. The *Crowland Chronicle* described his reaction upon the news of Buckingham's rebellion: 'This whole

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[144] Mancini, pp. 63-5.

[145] Ibid., p. 77.

[146] 'Vitellius A XVI', in *Chronicles of London*, ed. C. L. Kingsford (Dursley: Alan Sutton, 1977), p. 191.

[147] For details of the areas and rebels, see in particular, Ross, *Richard III*, pp. 105-112.

[148] John Gillingham, *The Wars of the Roses* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1981), p. 229.

[149] Gillingham, *Wars of the Roses*, p. 229.

conspiracy was known well enough, through spies, to King Richard who never acted sleepily but incisively and with the utmost vigilance'.[150] The use of spies reveals both Richard's political acumen and the realisation of his precarious position.

Was this success by Richard a result of his speedy political propaganda or was it merely the promise of money that proved to be Buckingham's downfall. From the lack of support for Buckingham it appears that he was not a very popular leader. At this juncture Richard appeared to engender more support amongst the population than the rebels and combined with his propaganda it proved successful in defeating Buckingham.

On hearing of the earl of Richmond's landing in Pembrokeshire Richard III had a less subtle approach to *agitation* propaganda as the *Crowland Chronicle* described:

> Meanwhile he sent out terrifying orders in manifold letters to the counties of the kingdom: none of their men... should withdraw themselves from the coming battle ... anyone who might be found ... not to have been present ... could hope for nothing but the loss of all his goods, his possessions and his life.[151]

In 1485 the *Crowland Chronicle* recorded that: 'on the king's side there was a greater number of fighting men than there had been seen before, on one side, in England'.[152] Outwardly it would appear that Richard's *agitation* had worked however, it was unfortunate that a large proportion of these men failed to fight, notably the affinities of Stanley and Northumberland which left Richard in a weakened position. The examples above reveal two different reactions taken by Richard to threats to his position and show his ability to judge a situation with a sharp political eye. With Buckingham's rebellion he adopted a conciliatory approach in his to the mass of the population whilst the leaders were dealt more ruthlessly, quite an astute approach. His reaction to Richmond's arrival is altogether more aggressive and threatening in *agitating* for support suggesting that he realised the greater danger from Richmond.

There has been a general consensus that Richard, having inherited much wealth from Edward IV, squandered it.[153] However, Horrox stated that in fact Edward had spent large amounts in his final years on military campaigns – in part as a result of his failed propaganda to raise money – and Richard inherited little actual cash to use.[154] Ross highlighted the fact that

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[150] *Crowland*, p. 163.
[151] Ibid., pp. 177-9.
[152] Ibid., p. 179.
[153] *Crowland*, pp. 160-3.
[154] Horrox, *Richard III*, p. 300.

Richard was actually well provided for financially through his extensive land revenues.[155]

In 1484 the House Commons granted Richard tonnage and poundage for life but he did not request a lay subsidy as he was only too aware of the unpopularity that Edward's demands for direct taxation had aroused. In terms of outward war Richard's reign was quiet. There was no actual war in France and a truce was negotiated with the Scots in September 1484.

In early 1485 as Richard's financial position deteriorated there was a campaign to raise loans. The defence of the realm, against both the Scots and the French was the primary motivating factor and the commissioners were directed to flatter any potential donors.[156] The *Crowland Chronicle* suggests that the approach was rather more direct: 'selected men were sent out…who extorted great sums of money from the coffers of persons of almost every rank in the kingdom, by prayers or threats, by fair means or foul'.[157]

Horrox pointed out that the majority of these letters failed to raise the amount initially requested. However, Horrox does not regard this as significant as there were others who did not lend at all.[158] From this it would appear that Richard's propaganda failed to attract sufficient loans and in some instances his rhetoric definitely fell upon deaf ears. Horrox suggested that his use of royal retainers rather than local individuals of note could have led to this poor response.[159] This rather confirms the shortcomings of firstly, his propaganda and secondly, his personality. In this situation it is unlikely that the use of local individuals would have made much difference to the outcome due to the lack of support for Richard.

Richard was a capable administrator, loyal to his friends and employees as well as a courageous soldier but his character flaws often lost him support. Richard's usurpation was not necessarily a barrier to a successful reign, as witnessed by Henry IV and his own brother Edward IV, however, the charge of murdering his nephews was an event that no amount of propaganda or personality could overcome.

Uprisings.

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[155] Ross, *Richard III*, p. 178.
[156] Horrox, *Richard III*, p. 306.
[157] *Crowland*, pp. 172-75.
[158] Horrox, *Richard III*, p. 307.
[159] Ibid., p. 307.

This next section will survey the evidence to reveal how the presence of uprisings during a reign was a reflection of a monarch's effective leadership and whether propaganda or personality was used to counteract potential discontent. Domestic unrest was an indicator that a particular group within society was aggrieved. During the period under discussion these groups ranged from the elite to the humble peasant. As will be seen in the section on taxation, financial hardship was often a major contributory factor to an uprising, but not exclusively. The causes of the grievances, rather than an in-depth analysis of the actual events, and the subsequent reaction of the monarch will seek to reveal whether personality or propaganda were responsible for the cause or affected the outcome of the uprising.

Case Study: Henry VI – A selection.

A long minority did not provide for a smooth transition to the throne for Henry and like Richard II he found much unrest on his accession. Watts suspected that Henry's 'personal rule' was a chimera and that Suffolk was essentially in control of the realm up to his death in May 1450.[160] The first major uprising of Henry's reign was Cade's Rebellion in the summer of 1450, although local in nature, was the result of many other factors including the loss of Normandy, the influence of the royal household and the feeling that the common weal had not been protected as it ought to be by the crown.[161] Complaint was being voiced quite openly at the time about the 'traitors' and their role in France and how they should be dealt with 'yif suche thraitours may be founde gilty, theyme to have execucion of lawe withoute any pardone'.[162]

But despite the grumblings of the populace about the running of the country Henry remained in himself relatively popular as may be seen from the reaction to Cade's rebellion in 1450: 'and all the nyght and on the morn cam moche peple to strength the king at Grenewich of lancastr and Chesshir and other shires'.[163] One may speculate that the death of the unpopular Suffolk had reignited the hopes of the realm that at last Henry was able to reign personally and may explain the above support. However, the numbers of the rebels were far greater than the royal army and the loyalty of the royal retainers was questionable.[164] Despite the death of Cade

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[160] Watts, *Henry VI*, p. 207.
[161] John Watts, 'Polemic and Politics in the 1450's', in *The Politics of Fifteenth-Century England: John Vale's Book*, ed. M. L. Kekewich, C. Richmond, A. F. Sutton, L. Visser-Fuchs, J. L. Watts (Stroud: Alan Sutton, 1995), pp. 3-42 (p. 8).
[162] *Politics of Fifteenth-Century England*, p. 204.
[163] 'Robert Bale's Chronicle', in *Six Town Chronicles of England*, ed. Ralph Flenley (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1911), p. 131.
[164] Griffiths, *Henry VI*, p. 624.

in the July Henry's government failed to cease the unrest which was a direct reflection of Henry's inability to control those around him who were continuing to be the focus of popular dissent. In early 1451 Henry's behaviour as recorded by Vitellius A XVI was suggestive of a king who was taking his duties seriously as Henry: 'wt certeyn of his Justices Rode in to Kent, and there abode vpon a moneth', and continues to describe how Henry rides regally through the city of London, physically asserting his authority: 'he came ageyn to London, and Rood Roially through the Cite'.[165]

During 1453 Henry became unwell and did not recover until after Christmas 1454 during which time the protectorate was in control with York at its head. It is thus difficult to ascribe any influence, in terms of propaganda, by Henry over the events at St. Albans in 1455 despite him being nominally in charge.[166]

The early autumn of 1459 saw further skirmishes between Henry and the Yorkists. The first of these was the battle of Blore Heath on 23rd September. York's *agitation* propaganda to raise rebellion against Henry VI was recorded in the Parliament Rolls':

> he wrote to many cities, boroughs and towns of this your noble realm, and to many individuals of one estate or another, to raise a general insurrection on the pretext of the common weal, planning to give battle to you, sovereign lord, beside Dartford in the county of Kent, and so destroy your most noble person.[167]

Henry's army was far larger than that raised by York despite the above attempt to raise support. There were very heavy casualties on both sides but the outcome was inconclusive and the next few weeks were spent with both sides regrouping before the next battle. However, in 1459 Vitellius A XVI commented upon an occasion when Henry failed to take the opportunity of positive *visual* propaganda: 'And where as men demed the king shuld have goon crowned upon seynt Edwardes day wt the procession he died not, nor no one of the lordes'.[168] Henry's masculinity was once more called into question when the chronicler described how it was the

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[165] 'Vitellius A XVI', in *Chronicles of London*, ed. C. L. Kingsford (Dursley: Alan Sutton, 1977), pp. 162-3. See above, p. 129, n. 117. The Parliament Rolls suggest that Henry was about to embark on a tour of the realm.

[166] The battle was the result of the animosity between Somerset, York and the Nevilles rather than an uprising against Henry personally, guised in the context of bad counsel.

[167] 'Henry VI: November 1459', in *Parliament Rolls of Medieval England*, ed. Chris Given-Wilson, Paul Brand, Seymour Phillips, Mark Ormrod, Geoffrey Martin, Anne Curry and Rosemary Horrox (Woodbridge, 2005), *British History Online* http://www.british-history.ac.uk/no-series/parliament-rolls-medieval/november-1459 [accessed 11 June 2016].

[168] 'Vitellius A XVI', in *Chronicles of London*, p.171. For a more positive impression made by Henry, see above, n. 165.

queen who was waging war against York whilst Henry remained impotent in London.[169]

In October 1459, despite the apparent support for Warwick before the Battle of Ludford, it appeared that Henry was still able to engender popular support as the *Crowland Chronicle* related:

> However, with the gathering of great numbers, consisting of both nobles and commons, the king's side was getting stronger every day especially after Andrew Trollop and his regulars from Calais had deserted the duke[York]; these troops called from overseas by their captain, the earl of Warwick, as though for the service of the king, found themselves committed unwillingly against him and so they gave their support to the king who had provided their keep and their wages.[170]

Henry's offer of a pardon meant that the troops defected from Warwick and their continued payment by the crown ensured their loyalty, not through any use of specific propaganda, but just the necessity of being paid. The fact that Henry's army was twice the size of the Yorkists' suggested that Yorkist propaganda had failed to raise support against Henry.[171] The Yorkists had spread rumours that Henry had died in order to gain support for their claim however, Henry's appearance made a mockery of this propaganda.[172]

The presence of Henry at the battle was of great importance and had a positive impact on the outcome, the more so as he had not been seen to any degree publicly that summer:

> After making a speech to all the lords, knights and nobles in your host in so witty, so knightly, so manly and so cheering a style, with such a princely bearing and assured manner, in which the lords and people took such joy and comfort.[173]

The Parliament Rolls were effusive in their description of the role that Henry played in Lancastrian success:

> Henry VI's presence with his troops proved decisive, and the Yorkist forces dissolved overnight rather than confront the king in battle. By the time parliament assembled on 20 November the Yorkist leaders had fled abroad: York himself to Ireland, while Salisbury, Warwick and York's eldest son Edward ended up in Calais.[174]

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[169] Ibid., pp.172-3.
[170] *Crowland*, pp. 109-11.
[171] Griffiths, *Henry VI*, p. 821.
[172] Wolffe, *Henry VI*, p. 319.
[173] 'Henry VI: November 1459', in *Parliament Rolls of Medieval England*, ed. Chris Given-Wilson, Paul Brand, Seymour Phillips, Mark Ormrod, Geoffrey Martin, Anne Curry and Rosemary Horrox (Woodbridge, 2005), *British History Online* http://www.british-history.ac.uk/no-series/parliament-rolls-medieval/november-1459 [accessed 11 June 2016].
[174] Ibid.

The success of the Lancastrians, led by their king, reflected the importance of the king's physical presence at times of crisis, as Wolffe stated 'the mid fifteenth-century king could himself do no wrong'.[175] Unfortunately Henry was unable to maintain this burst of activity and only two years later the situation was favouring the Yorkists once more.

Ingulph's Chronicle related for the year 1461 how support for Henry waned in the Midlands:

> seeing that they were despised and abandoned by king Henry, who, at the instigation of the queen, had taken himself to the north, utterly forsook him, after he had completed a reign of 39 years, and their hearts were now no longer with him, nor would they any longer admit of his being king.[176]

This gives a very clear indication of the low esteem in which Henry was held in this particular region and yet only two years earlier we can see from the Calais garrison that he had been able to raise popular support. The chronicle gives the strong impression that the polity felt let down by Henry VI and his inability to perform his kingly duties; however, the author was careful to place the blame with Margaret.

Henry did not appear particularly unpopular with the commons but it was his relationship with the magnates and their influence that affected his standing and therefore the perception of his ability to rule. By the late 1450's his authority was no longer recognised, not even by his subjects, his lack of a personality highlighted how critical it was to medieval kingship especially when his opponent Edward IV had an abundance of personal attributes. His failure to actively employ propaganda suggests an inability by Henry to engage with politics, whether through personal choice or ill health. However, those around Henry and especially Margaret were only too aware of the importance of political communication but apparently had little success in urging Henry to become involved.

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[175] B. P. Wolffe, 'The personal rule of Henry VI' in S. B. Chrimes, C. D. Ross & R. A Griffiths (eds), *Fifteenth Century England 1399-1509* (Stroud: Alan Sutton, 1995), pp. 29-48 (p. 32).

[176] *Ingulph's Chronicle of the Abbey of Croyland*, trans. Henry T. Riley (London: Henry G. Bohn, 1854) p. 424.

Taxation and war support.

'taxation was granted for the benefit of the realm, not merely that of the king'.[177]

This according to Mark Ormrod was the developing view of the polity during the late fourteenth century. This attitude was a reaction to the Poll tax of 1380 and reflected the fact that the population wanted their money to be used to benefit the whole realm and not just the royal coffers.[178] G. L Harriss stated that the king's need for financial support 'brought the Crown into a direct relationship with a wide range of its subjects and imposed a specific test upon its authority and good faith'.[179]

The two established types of taxation available to the medieval monarch were direct or indirect. The former was usually raised to fund the cost of foreign war, usually in France or Scotland, and was granted by parliament upon request from the king. The latter was a more regular income, such as the customs duties, collected permanently, and tonnage and poundage, which was authorised by parliament. It was the direct taxation that caused the most problems and its granting, or not, by parliament was very much a reflection of the support of and belief in, the monarch and as such it could be influenced by either personality or propaganda. Taxation became problematic area of policy of late medieval kings as the Hundred Years War drained the nation's resources. Kings had increasingly to muster both propaganda and charm in order to maintain support from both the commons and population. An examination of the response to calls for taxation will attempt to reveal whether parliament and the rest of the realm were generally influenced more by personality or by propaganda.

Closely allied with taxation was support for war as they were both inextricably linked in times of foreign war. Harriss concluded that 'the service of men, equipment and victuals might thus be demanded in the same breath and in the same terms as loans of money'.[180] The success of Edward III and the Black Prince in France had created an environment in which the country was ready to support their king financially and physically. However, once the

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[177] Ormrod, *Political Life*, p. 94.
[178] Ibid., p. 94.
[179] G. L. Harriss, 'Aids, Loans and Benevolences', *Historical Journal*, VI (1963), 1-19, p. 3.
[180] Ibid., p. 6.

situation in France began to stagnate in the 1370's some of the enthusiasm for war began to wane, particularly under Richard II. His desire for peace, however, was not universally popular.[181] Henry V re-ignited English pride and enthusiasm with his success at Agincourt in 1415 but even then it was becoming apparent that the nation was struggling with the financial burden of war.

The rationale behind war propaganda may be two-fold as P. S. Lewis identified both a political and moral background to medieval war propaganda.[182] Foreign war could also be used as a diversion from domestic unrest and this could be the case for Henry V's French campaign. It also had to be very persuasive if it was to succeed in its three main aims. Firstly, to raise finance for a costly foreign campaign. Secondly, it needed to *agitate* men to defend their home. Finally, it had also to justify itself in order to raise supplies, ships, armoury and victuals. Thus one needs to assess whether it was the rhetoric or the wages or even another motive that provided men with the incentive to go to war.

Anthony Tuck argued that 'the profit motive was of even greater importance than propaganda and patriotism in persuading men to serve'.[183] In 1417 Usk reported that 'the booty taken in Normandy was auctioned throughout England'.[184] War also provided employment for a large number of young men who then could use their acquired skills for administrative careers back at home.[185] The profit motive operated only at a personal level and financially the crown still needed to use propaganda to raise funds via taxation for supplies, equipment and wages from the rest of the population who often had little to gain financially from the continuation of the war.[186] Simon Payling's investigation into military service during the reign of Henry VI emphasised the fact that many youngest sons saw military service as their only option to earn a living. Conversely some gentry had little financial incentive to abandon their comfortable life

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[181] Anthony Tuck, 'Why Men Fought in the Hundred Years War', *History Today*, 33.4 (1983), 35-40 (p. 35)

[182] P. S. Lewis, 'War Propaganda and Historiography in Fifteenth Century France and England', *TRHS*, fifth series, 15 (1965), 1-21.

[183] Tuck, 'Why Men', p. 37. See also K. B. McFarlane, 'A Business-partnership in War and Administration, 1421-1445' *EHR*, LXXVIII (1963), 290-309.

[184] *Usk*, p. 267.

[185] Tuck, 'Why Men Fought', p. 36.

[186] Simon Payling, 'War and Peace: Military and Administrative Service amongst the English Gentry in the Reign of Henry VI', in Peter Coss and Christopher Tyerman (eds), *Soldiers, Nobles and Gentlemen: Essays in Honour of Maurice Keen* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2009), pp. 240-58 (p. 243).

at home for the dangers of foreign war.[187] Payling stated that often service was a 'product of their lord's martial inclinations'.[188] Payling's article reinforces Tuck's assertion that profit was indeed a greater motivator than political allegiance. However, in the case of those in the affinity of a lord they may not have had the opportunity to decide for themselves between profit or politics at a personal level but were at the behest of their lord's allegiance.

Overall, there were a number of reasons, personal and national, that drew men into battle. However, assessing the level of support for a foreign war was a good indicator of the public's attitude towards their sovereign and the effectiveness of any *agitational* propaganda. The call to the war was justified on both a patriotic and moral level but even this was not always enough to gain support with financial reward often being the deciding factor. The use of *agitation* propaganda would be the dominant style of propaganda most likely to be effective. The subsequent case studies for the reigns of Henry V and Edward IV will attempt to show whether it was personality or propaganda that was more effective in raising taxation and support for war.

Taxation and War Support Case Study 1: Henry V.

No other reign of the fifteenth century was so synonymous with martial success in France. Henry's French campaign drew the whole nation into a short-lived era of national glory and pride. Before Agincourt, Henry had not really achieved anything particularly outstanding militarily. It was rather his embodiment of the hopes of a nation that carried him along rather than any tangible actions

Henry had the advantage over his father of having had some financial experience as the nominal head of the council in 1406 that took over control of royal finances. Henry was determined to control expenditure and put the royal finances on a more secure footing than had previously been the case. In order to pay for his French campaign Henry had been granted the tonnage and poundage in 1414 in addition to the wool subsidy of 1413. As the campaign approached, Parliament granted two more full subsidies with the first due in February 1415.[189] This was in part due to the confidence that the Commons had in Henry to use the money wisely. Despite Henry's excellent preparation, both financial and practical, he

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[187] Payling, 'War and Peace', p. 243.
[188] Ibid., p. 244.
[189] Christopher Allmand, *Henry V* ([New edition] New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1997), p. 374.

still found himself short of money to pay the soldiers' wages in spring 1415.[190] In March 1414 in an attempt to restore peace he issued a general pardon to all miscreants apart from murderers and rapists:

> Writ to the Sheriffs to proclaim a general pardon granted by the King to all rebels, felons, &c., who severally sue for charters of pardon before Michaelmas Day next.[191]

This pardon was intended to have a double benefit of not only securing peace at home before embarking on a foreign war but also those pardoned were to serve in the war. It was an act of *integration* and was part of an extensive series of law enforcements designed to ensure domestic harmony during his potentially lengthy absences in France. W. M. Ormrod saw these legal measures as an important part in Henry's construction of his public image.[192]

Initially the country had been cautious about embarking on a war with France. T. B. Pugh said that the nobility was not so interested in going to war but 'the young Henry V went to war with France because he chose to do so and, in view of his personal character and temperament, we can be sure that it was no hasty or ill-considered decision'.[193] Henry's propaganda to justify his campaign in Normandy was based on the ancient connection between England and Normandy.[194] The *Gesta Henrici Quinti* declared that Henry was 'to recover his duchy of Normandy, which belongs to him…dating from the time of William the first'.[195]

The *English Chronicle* stated that Henry: 'spoken off the titull þat he hadde to Normandy, Gascoyn, and Gyen, þat were his enheritaunce' and if the dauphin would do not so peacefully then Henry: 'wolde, be the grace of Godde, wynne and gete yt be the sworde in shorte tyme'.[196] Tuck believed that Henry's motivation was to use Normandy as a strategic base in order to conquer the rest of France.[197] Allmand claimed that the support for the

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[190] G. L. Harriss, 'Financial Policy', in G. L. Harriss (ed.), *Henry V: The Practice of Kingship* (Stroud: Alan Sutton, 1993), pp. 159-79 (p. 165).

[191] 'Folios cxliii - clx: Oct 1414 - ', in *Calendar of Letter-Books of the City of London: I, 1400-1422*, ed. Reginald R Sharpe (London, 1909), pp. 130-146. *British History Online* http://www.british-history.ac.uk/london-letter-books/voli/pp130-146 [accessed 11 March 2018].

[192] Ormrod, *Political Life*, p. 126.

[193] Pugh, *Henry V*, p. 49.

[194] Tuck, 'Why Men', p. 39.

[195] *Gesta Henrici Quinti: The Deeds of Henry the Fifth*, trans. Frank Taylor & John S. Roskell (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), p. 17.

[196] *English Chronicle*, p. 42.

[197] Ibid., p. 39.

French war was due 'to the personality of one man able to stir up national sentiment in favour of himself and his cause'.[198]

The victory at Agincourt, however, gave rise to perhaps an overenthusiastic response to his achievements. Anne Curry hinted at Henry's potential for manipulating his financial support by suggesting that Henry made it 'appear' that he intended to continue his campaign in France immediately after his success at Agincourt. By giving this impression the Commons brought forward the payment of the next instalment but then Henry returned to England.[199] Curry argued that this showed another side of Henry's character, that is, a man not as confident as history had portrayed as he was nervous about a French counter attack when his troops were depleted and exhausted.[200] In actuality, although an interesting postulation, this decision suggested that he was probably taking the pragmatic option rather than using propaganda to deceive the Commons. In 1416 Henry had to face open opposition to his demands for taxation from the palatinate of Chester. Michael Bennett revealed the irony of the situation, whereby the previous earl of Chester was facing resistance from his own Lancastrian supporters.[201] Did this event reveal some failing in the persuasiveness of Henry? Bennett emphasised that Cheshire was very different to the rest of the country and 'it had a reputation for lawlessness and political restiveness'.[202] Although Cheshire appeared reluctant to aid the French war financially, it had supported the war with large numbers of men. Bennett identified the main protagonists as belonging to the yeoman class who felt that they were meant to carry the financial burden. He regarded this issue as more about social inequalities rather than personal antipathy towards the king.[203] Henry personally intervened and travelled northwards to try to resolve the situation but acknowledged that 'he was looking to Cheshire more for manpower than money'.[204] This episode revealed Henry's political skill in realising that men as well as money were required to win a war and that he would have been committing political suicide to have started a major revolt in such an important region.

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[198] Allmand, *Henry V*, p. xviii-xix.

[199] Anne Curry, 'After Agincourt, What Next? Henry V and the Campaign of 1416', in Linda Clark (ed.), *Conflicts, Consequences and the Crown in the Late Middle Ages*, The Fifteenth Century VII (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2007), pp. 23-51 (p. 27).

[200] Curry, 'After Agincourt', p. 27.

[201] Michael Bennett, 'Henry V and the Cheshire Tax Revolt of 1416', in Gwilym Dodd (ed.), *Henry V: New Interpretations* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2013), pp. 171-86.

[202] Bennett, 'Henry V', p. 172.

[203] Ibid., p. 181.

[204] Ibid., p. 186.

Harriss stated that Henry was capable of exerting money through threats as he did in 1415 with the foreign merchants of London.[205] He probably realised that he could be harsher on the merchants than on his own population without incurring as much opposition. Interestingly, a loan of 1419 authorised whilst Henry was in France raised nothing, which strongly supports the premise that his personal presence was necessary in securing financial support.

In the face of growing opposition to his demands for financial support Henry produced the *Gesta Henrici Quinti*, probably in 1417, and although a narrative of Henry's deeds it still sought to justify his foreign policy through persuasive propaganda, appealing to the dual demands of finance and manpower.[206] A great deal of emphasis was placed on the intervention of God in securing English victory thus justifying the invasion: 'let it be ascribed to God alone, from Whom is every victory'.[207]

Henry introduced an innovative approach to his financial shortcomings by producing loans raised on the security of the crown jewels.[208]

> Indenture between Richard Courtenay, Bishop of Norwich, and Treasurer of the King's Chamber, of the one part, and Thomas Fauconer, the Mayor, and Commonalty of the City, of the other part, witnessing the delivery of a great collar of gold, composed of crowns and antelopes richly enamelled and bejewelled, to the Mayor as security for the repayment of a loan of 10,000 marks made by the City to the King.[209]

His personal journey around the country as discussed in the previous chapter was highly successful in *agitating* the polity to fund the French campaign.[210] His personality and powers of persuasion obviously had a favourable impact upon his subjects. The *Coventry Leet Book* provided evidence that in 1421 the city gave Henry £100 and a cup worth £10 together with £100 and another gold cup for the queen on their visit to Coventry.[211]

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[205] Harriss, 'Financial Policy', p. 166.

[206] *Gesta Henrici Quinti*, p. xxiii.

[207] *Gesta Henrici Quinti*, p. 99.

[208] Harriss, 'Financial Policy', p. 165. Henry managed to raise £5,000 in 1417 and a further £9,000 in 1421.

[209] 'Folios cxliii - clx: Oct 1414 - ', in *Calendar of Letter-Books of the City of London: I, 1400-1422*, ed. Reginald R Sharpe (London, 1909), pp. 130-146. *British History Online* http://www.british-history.ac.uk/london-letter-books/voli/pp130-146 [accessed 11 March 2018].

[210] Above, pp. 90-91.

[211] *Coventry Leet Book*, p. 34.

Henry V apparently navigated the treacherous waters of taxation with success. He managed to raise adequate money for his campaigns although not always enough to maintain the costs involved in maintaining a presence in France. The money was spent on the war in France and not on extravagant household expenditure and thus he kept the commons satisfied. His financial acumen, personal involvement and charisma ensured that finances were not a source of popular grievance. Henry's blend of personality and propaganda ensured that the controversial issue of taxation was not a problem during his reign. However, had he lived longer there was the real possibility that the price of success in France may have been too great even for Henry V to have overcome the financial reality of the dual monarchy. By the end of his reign Allmand concedes that enthusiasm for war was beginning to wane as revealed by the refusal of the Norfolk gentry to go to France.[212]

Henry's short reign combined historic chivalric kingship, political propaganda, when expedient, with a charismatic personality. It is perhaps his reign that fully epitomised successful late medieval kingship combined with a growing awareness of the need for propaganda. Henry had already showed himself as a competent commander whilst prince and thus there were few questions over his ability to discharge his duties as king.

The French campaign had roused a nationalistic sentiment that resulted in the granting of taxes for the war but nevertheless he still had to make a propaganda tour of the country in 1421 to raise more funds. This tour highlighted his personal qualities that drew admiration, money and support from a war weary nation. His French ambitions fulfilled the adage that foreign war would ensure domestic harmony. Henry appeared to direct the force of his personality into *agitation* propaganda, to raise support for his French ambitions and resorted to *integration* propaganda often through the legal system to impose his authority on domestic unrest. It could be said that Henry used charm and propaganda to great effect during his brief but successful reign.

Taxation and War Support Case Study 2: Edward IV.

One of Richard, duke of York's, legacies to his son Edward IV was that he had supported the demands from the Commons that the king 'should live of his own'.[213] This rather restricted Edward's options in his early years when he was short of cash and needed to oppose

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[212] Allmand, *Henry V*, p. 439.
[213] J. R. Lander, *Government and Community England 1450-1509* (Sevenoaks: Edward Arnold, 1980), p. 69.

the threat from Henry VI which meant that he had to employ persuasive *agitation* propaganda to raise support rather than asking for taxes.

Edward's letter to the aldermen of the city of London in March 1462 was an astute piece of *agitation* propaganda as he emphasised the threat from not only Henry VI but the fact that the Lancastrians may be joining forces with both the Scots and the French: 'to distroye utterly the people, the name, the tongue and all the blood Englisshe of this oure saide reaume'.[214] By proposing that both the French and the Scots may be involved he was implying that the nation would be attacked from both the north and the south. He further suggested national humiliation might occur by intimating that Henry VI had offered to renounce English claims to the French crown; whether this was true or not it would certainly have worried the London mercantile community in particular. The text of a letter to Thomas Cook in March 1462 made it clear that Edward was asking for voluntary contributions 'wee desire no thing of thayme by waye of imposicion, compulcion or of precedent'.[215] By November 1462 it was said that: 'the king went Northward wt a grete people', suggesting that his *agitation* propaganda had been successful which resulted in Margaret of Anjou departing upon the news of Edward's support.[216]

Mancini hinted at Edward's adroit use of propaganda in order to gain financial support: 'thus by appealing to causes, either true or at least with some semblance of truth, he did not appear to exhort but almost to beg for subsidies'.[217] Mancini was clear that people knew that Edward was economical with the truth and that his avarice was at the root of many of his calls for financial assistance.[218]

Edward's second reign was marked by a greater awareness of the importance of fiscal probity and popular support. As Parliament had refused to grant enough taxes for war, a reflection perhaps of a failure of Edward's propaganda he had therefore, to be imaginative in his approach to raising money which led to the new tax or 'benevolence', as it was known,

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[214] *John Vale's Book*, pp.135-137. Edward also suggested methods that the alderman could use to persuade the citizens to contribute in Anne F. Sutton & Livia Visser-Fuchs, 'The Provenance of the Manuscript: The Lives and Archive of Sir Thomas Cook and his Man of Affairs, John Vale', pp. 73-123 (p. 84).
[215] Ibid., p. 137.
[216] 'Vitellius A XVI', in *Chronicles of London*, p. 177.
[217] Mancini, p. 67.
[218] Ibid., p. 67.

being introduced in 1472.[219] The benevolence was basically Edward trying to 'dress up' taxation to make it appear less onerous. Edward offered the opportunity for men to exchange their duty to defend the country against the Scots or Welsh, to a payment appropriate to their means. The advantage to this tax was that it did not affect the poor but only applied to those with wealth of over 20 marks which meant that Edward was seen not to be harming those in society who were less fortunate.

The imposition of the new tax was not popular and indeed people stood fast and did not pay it as the *Crowland Chronicle* recorded 'a new and unheard of imposition of a gift was introduced whereby everyone was to give out of his good will what he wished or more accurately, what he did not wish'.[220] The citizens of Coventry were not eager to pay taxes as Edward complained to the authorities in 1472: 'or denyd or denyen to pay suche taxes, tallagez, Imposicions & other chargez'.[221] In 1474 Edward wrote again to Coventry *agitating* for financial support for the war for the 'restitucion of this land to his old fame & prosperite'.[222] He further urged the commissioners to 'moue the people by all the goodly means that thei can', to pay the benevolence.[223] Despite Edward's good relationship with the mayoralty of Coventry he still appeared to struggle to gain the support of many of the citizens. The *Crowland Chronicle* recorded how Edward did not just rely on his own persuasive powers to raise taxes for the war but enlisted the support of others: 'many eloquent speeches were addressed to Parliament by speakers both from home and abroad'.[224] This approach by Edward reveals an element of sophistication in his approach to *agitation* propaganda and an awareness that after the initial unpopularity of the benevolence he needed to appear to have the support of those around him. This method apparently worked as Virgoe stated that Edward's benevolence of 1474-5 was actually very 'lucrative' and raised £21,000.[225]

This was confirmed by the *Crowland Chronicle* who reported that 'these large grants amounted to sums the like of which were never seen before'.[226] Edward decided to take a personal lead in raising money by travelling around the country and personally *agitating* for

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[219] Lander, *Wars of the Roses*, p. 153.
[220] *Crowland*, p. 135.
[221] *Coventry Leet Book*, pp. 383-384.
[222] Ibid., p. 411.
[223] Ibid., p. 412.
[224] *Crowland*, p. 133.
[225] R. Virgoe, 'The Benevolence of 1481', *EHR*, 104 (1989), 25-45 (p. 26).
[226] *Crowland*, p. 133.

funds for the French campaign. His attractiveness playing a role in gaining funds, especially from the ladies, as the *Great Chronicle of London* famously recorded:

> [Edward)] called before him ... a rich widow ... and she liberally had granted to him £10, he thanked her ... and kissed her ... that for that great bounty and kind deed, he should have £20 for his £10.[227]

Edward realised that his personal presence could have a more successful outcome as 'it deployed the king's best talent: his persuasive charm'.[228] Thus it appeared that traditional rhetoric from the government was not enough to elicit the support required for such an ambitious plan and Edward resorted to using the power of his personal image as a propagandist tool.

Many of the arguments were old stalwarts, such as the king's claim to his right inheritance in France and that domestic unrest would be avoided by the channeling of energies into external war. Edward IV also argued that the conquest of Gascony and Normandy would reduce the cost of keeping the seas against a formerly hostile coast. Charles Ross argued that these arguments were not truly representative of Edward's real motives.[229] The relatively low key way in which this *agitation* propaganda appeared to have been conducted suggested to J. R. Lander that the emphasis for this campaign was 'squarely and firmly placed upon defense rather than upon aggression'.[230] Lander regarded Edward's campaign as a reaction to the long-term effects of two decades of Anglo-Burgundian-French relationships.[231] Thus there appeared to be a variety of reasons why Edward IV used propaganda to gain support for his invasion of France. He was appealing to his own supposed hereditary rights, internal peace and economic prudence but what his true motives were was not clear. It may simply have been intended as an act of retaliation against Louis XI after his support for Warwick and Margaret of Anjou.

Edward's French campaign in 1475 was pro-active in attempting to create a crisis by highlighting the enmity between England and France. It in part showed that Edward felt sufficiently confident of his position, both in terms of personal popularity and the demise of a

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[227] 'The Great Chronicle of London', cited in J. R. Lander, *The Wars of the Roses* (Stroud: Alan Sutton, 1990), p. 154.

[228] Colin Richmond & Margaret Lucille Kekewich, 'The Search for Stability, 1461-1483', in *John Vale's Book*, pp. 43-72 (p. 68).

[229] Ross, *Edward IV*, p. 208.

[230] J. R. Lander, 'The Hundred Years War and Edward IV's 1475 Campaign in France', in A. J. Slavin (ed.), *Tudor Men & Institutions: Studies in English Law and Government* (Louisiana: Baton Rouge, 1972), pp. 70-100 (p. 80).

[231] Lander, 'Hundred Years War', p. 81.

Lancastrian threat. Despite apparent problems Edward raised one of the largest armies ever to invade France which is a testament to his skill as both a king and an astute propagandist, particularly at *agitation*.[232] In comparing Edward with Henry V, Lander conceded that Edward had raised a similar amount of money in the same time period but 'with infinitely more trouble than Henry…and against far greater resistance to payment'.[233] Although Edward's propaganda was evidently successful the resistance demonstrated that first, the country was very tired of foreign conflict and second, that his personality was perhaps not as attractive as Henry's.

However, when war was avoided, as Edward succumbed to the financial benefits offered at the Treaty of Picquigny in August 1475, such was the public outcry upon his return that he was obliged to remit three quarters of the next fifteenth and tenth that were due.[234] The *Crowland Chronicle* commented that after this date Edward realised that it was unwise to try and ask for more subsidies and turned his attention to other means of increasing his income, such as the appointment of customs surveyors.[235]

In 1481 the situation in the Scottish borders was deteriorating and Edward understood that he would need to embark on a costly campaign. He therefore instigated the collection of the second benevolence. Naturally Edward used his most eloquent propaganda in his signet letters asking for aid, emphasising the threat from the Scots: 'to the confusion & vtter disheritaunce of vs & of our lieges, yf grete & mighty resistence be not spedely had, agaynest his vntrue & long purpensed malice'.[236] Virgoe concluded that this benevolence was a testimony to the efficiency of Edward's government and authority as it may have raised approximately £30,000.[237]

Overall, Edward's reign was characterised by the public complaint of the perceived avarice of himself and his court together with the reality that he had insufficient resources for defence and that despite his sophisticated propaganda it was his 'personal' intervention that yielded the greater results. Edward benefitted from an engaging personality, intelligence and

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[232] Lander, 'Hundred Years War', p. 93. Edward's efforts produced the largest army to cross the channel, 11,451 men.

[233] Ibid., p. 89.

[234] M. Jurkowski, 'Parliamentary and Prerogative Taxation in the Reign of Edward IV', *Parliamentary History*, 18 (1999), 271-90 (p. 283).

[235] *Crowland*, pp. 137-8.

[236] *Coventry Leet Book*, pp. 474-77 (p. 475) for a lengthy example of Edward's propaganda to raise money for the war against the Scots.

[237] Virgoe, 'Benevolence', pp. 38, 45.

physical strength. Despite having usurped Henry VI, it was these personal qualities that made him initially popular, particularly with the city of London. However, Lancastrian and familial opposition to his rule was a constant theme during his first reign. After 1471 he was more secure, in his style of kingship, and in his finances as Steel stated 'the ingenious Edward is secure, and so the powerful assistance of magnate treasurers, staplers, Londoners and Italian finance houses…falls right away'.[238] Through his vigorous re-organisation of the royal finances he freed himself from one of the major political restraints and causes of unrest that afflicted the late medieval monarchy.

When dealing with taxation Edward used a combination of propaganda and personality to raise funds. His propaganda was relatively traditional in that he played upon the fears of the populace, particularly the Londoners, and successfully *agitated* the population into paying their taxes. His use of *physical* propaganda combined with his charismatic personality on the tours around the country as seen in 1472 were successful in raising both support and money. In short Edward used propaganda when necessary, with mixed results, and his personality informed his policies, which were in the most part relatively successful.

Conclusion.

The case studies above demonstrate how important personal charisma was, especially when dealing with taxes. When the population were beginning to tire of the burden of taxation and other methods of propaganda had not been successful, it was often the physical appearance of both Henry V and Edward IV that persuaded people to pay.

This highlights the degree to which even the most effective propaganda was limited in its ability to persuade the English polity to part willingly with their money. The many examples of mishandled policy and unfortunate expressions of royal personalities were the dominant factors here. The increasing mutual understanding of the purpose and value of parliamentary taxation should have provided opportunities to these monarchs but their inability to exploit the inherited indirect and direct systems to the full, and even more to innovate as Edward III had before them and Henry VIII was afterward, was in part down to the limited power of propaganda in these interactions between ruler and ruled.

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[238] Steel, *Receipt of the Exchequer*, p. 357.

If one applies the differentiation between *agitation* and *integration* propaganda then *integration* propaganda, by its definition, could be used during quieter periods as a method of consolidation. An overview of the contemporary sources available revealed that the most striking feature was that events of major importance were reported or matters pertaining to the author's locality or personal affiliations. Therefore, to say that propaganda was used only during crises becomes misleading. The nature of writing, to inform or entertain, meant that the sensational made better reading. Thus, during quieter periods some contemporary sources failed to report on the mundane issues but this does not mean that propaganda was not being used. *Integration* propaganda was not always used in conjunction with a crisis in political affairs but was employed in a more subtle way, such as *visual* propaganda.

So what was it that differentiated these kings between being successful or not? They all had the same institutional framework available to use to their advantage along with similar resources, although royal finance was subject to periods of ebb and flow. The methods of propaganda did not substantially vary from one reign to another and were relatively constant from the use of proclamations to processions. The primary difference lay with the personality of the king, propaganda on its own was not enough to influence, it needed to be projected through a charismatic persona. *Agitation* war propaganda in particular benefitted greatly from the personal intervention and involvement of outgoing and robust characters such as Henry V and Edward IV.

CHAPTER IV

The North as a Producer and Receiver of Propaganda.

'The influence of the North was disproportionate to its wealth and population.'[1]

R. L. Storey was expressing the view that the North of England, during the fifteenth century, wielded not inconsiderable political sway. Storey was basing this opinion on the role of the private affinities of the Lancastrian dynasty that came from this part of the kingdom and the importance of the Anglo-Scottish border in influencing the politics of the region.

Was the North only actively involved when it was directly affected by political issues? Was the North just an appendage of national magnate ambition and politics? This chapter will be a case study for exploring the issues in the whole thesis in relation to one region, particularly in respect to the importance of the integration of the political community that is necessary, according to Ellul, for propaganda to be effective.[2] The areas under discussion are Yorkshire and Northumberland and will include the differences between the rural and urban communities in their attitudes to politics and political propaganda, the main city under discussion being York. The emphasis will be to confirm the presence of propaganda within the region, whether it was being used consciously and to establish whether or not it was successful. The North will be examined as the *subject* of propaganda by others, that is, contemporary views of the region, and second as both a *producer* of and as an *audience* for, propaganda.

This period was synonymous with the rivalry of the Percy and the Neville families and the exceptional power that they held in the North. These aristocratic families with their regional estates meant that politics extended out into the provinces and was not just centred around London. Simon Walker wrote that although policy came from Westminster, it was either

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[1] R. L. Storey, 'The North of England', in S. B. Chrimes, C. D. Ross and R. A. Griffiths (eds), *Fifteenth Century England 1399-1509* (Stroud: Alan Sutton, 1995), pp. 129-144.
[2] Ellul, p. 6.

'implemented or thwarted in the provinces'.[3] A. J. Pollard argued that the Lancastrian usurpation of 1399 ushered in a period of increased Northern influence through the royal affinity based in the region which was only dissipated by the weak rule of Henry VI.[4] This implied that politics in the North could have an impact on Westminster and thus played a part in the potential success or failure of a monarch. Christine Carpenter stated that despite the expansion of royal administration into the regions, it was still the nobility that held the real power in local government and that the nobility played a vital role linking central government to the locality.[5] However, M. J. Bennett in his study of Cheshire regarded the gentry as holding the real power but it is worth remembering that the county had no notable nobility and thus its social structure differed from many counties.[6] In her article on Clarence and the Midlands, Carpenter emphasized the importance of the tenure of land and property, in the politics of a region, by both magnate and monarch.[7] Mark Arvanigian, writing about the Durham gentry, saw the study of regional politics as vital if the overall picture of national politics was to become transparent.[8] Christian Liddy stated that the counties of Northumberland, Yorkshire and Durham 'were characterised by a high concentration of noble landed power' and perhaps were more feudal in their structure than other regions.[9] The interaction between lordship and the local community, according to Liddy, revealed more about how society operated rather than the differences between the groups. High profile magnates like the Percies and Nevilles, tended to dominate the records, especially concerning national politics, often at the expense of local politics where different issues informed the decisions and lives of the lesser gentry and commons. The decline in regular Marcher activity meant that the political aspirations of the magnates in the far North changed focus from warfare to the acquisition of land and political

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[3] S. K. Walker, 'Lordship and Lawlessness in the Palatinate of Lancaster, 1370-1400', *Journal of British Studies*, 28 (1989), 325-348.

[4] A. J. Pollard (ed.), *The North of England in the Age of Richard III* (Stroud: Alan Sutton, 1996), p. xvii.

[5] Christine Carpenter, *Locality and Polity: A Study of Warwickshire Landed Society 1401-1499* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), pp. 19, 348.

[6] M. J. Bennett, 'A County Community: Social Cohesion amongst the Cheshire gentry, 1400-1425', *NH*, VIII (1973), 24-44.

[7] Christine Carpenter, 'The Duke of Clarence and the Midlands: A Study in the Interplay of Local and National Politics', *Midland History*, XI (1986), 23-48.

[8] Mark Arvanigian, 'The Durham Gentry and the Scottish March, 1370-1400: County Service in Late Medieval England', *NH*, XLII (2005), 257-273 (p. 258).

[9] Christian Liddy, *The Bishopric of Durham in the Late Middle Ages: Lordship, Community and the Cult of St. Cuthbert* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2008), p. 77. In counties such as Leicester, Derbyshire, Gloucestershire, Sussex and Nottinghamshire the gentry acted independently from the nobility.

pre-eminence. This change in emphasis led to political unrest at a local level which drew the attention of London as the region was now a scene for potentially disruptive activity that could affect domestic politics.

It would be pertinent as this point to establish where, in terms of geographical location, the chroniclers and other sources meant when they referred to the North. Andy King has recently discussed the implications of the contemporary identification of the North as being the territory above the Trent, irrespective of the various and varied different counties within the region, suggesting 'this southern tendency to lump together the whole of the North had consequences for the way that it was perceived'.[10] Matt Holford has also commented on this use of the Trent as the geographical border between North and South: 'the area north of the river Trent became increasingly associated with defence against the Scots, and the North in turn became associated with the area beyond the Trent', such that 'the North was a region created by outsiders'.[11] The Cheshiremen, often regarded as wild and lawless, were very different from the men of Yorkshire and neither would have wanted to be associated with each other but, in the eyes of the contemporary commentators they were all from the North. The North-South divide is a term that may be traced back to the medieval period but was very much influenced by Tudor propaganda. Helen Jewell discussed this idea of the North-South divide and saw fear of the North by the southerners as a major factor in any hostility.[12] Much of this antipathy was associated with the war against the Scots and the perception that the men of the North were aggressive, although they were usually on the defensive rather than offensive. Storey stated that when there was a Scottish threat it was the men of Yorkshire, Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire who were mustered to defend the border.[13]

The geographical proximity to Scotland made the North important politically as a locus for a legitimate administrative and military presence in the region. This led to the establishment of organized and well-armed retinues by the local landed families. It was these retinues that not only helped to secure the border but were also employed to support their lord in other

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[10] Andy King, 'The Anglo-Scottish Marches and the Perception of "The North" in Fifteenth-Century England', *NH*, XLIX (2012), 37-50 (p. 40).
[11] Matt Holford, 'The North and the Dynamics of Regional Identity in Later Medieval England', in Bill Lancaster, Diana Newton, and Natasha Vall (eds), *An Agenda for Regional History* (Newcastle: Northumbria University Press, 2007), pp. 303-316 (pp. 305, 313).
[12] Helen Jewell, *The North South Divide: The Origins of Northern Consciousness in England* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1994).
[13] Storey, 'North of England', p. 130.

disputes whether local or national. Tuck stated that the geographical position of Northumberland gave 'a higher degree of cohesion and self-consciousness amongst its gentry families'.[14] This probably also gave the borders population a greater awareness of the impact that political decisions, often made remotely, could have on their region and wellbeing. Inevitably this led to the gentry directly involving themselves in politics which was rare in most areas, excepting perhaps the Welsh marches and the south coast close to France.

The skirmishes of the late thirteenth and early fourteenth century on the Anglo-Scottish border further enforced an impression of a lawless and warlike North. The constant warring between England and the Scots had provided a military purpose for many men, not just Northerners. The opportunity for success in the borders attracted sons of the southern nobility with the promise of booty and social betterment. This meant that there was a coterie of men who had experience and knowledge of the North in terms of both geography and culture – it was not an unknown or alien region. After 1400 royal expeditions into Scotland became less frequent and thus issues of border security became very much focussed on the Northern magnates and their affinities.[15] Inevitably this produced a new generation in the south who were not accustomed to border skirmishes and thus not familiar with the population of that area and indeed had no domestic knowledge of warfare.[16] Thus there developed the belief that the region was filled with a population who enjoyed nothing better than a fight, leading to the misapprehension that Northerners were barbaric. King also cited the presence of various English knights at Parliament who witnessed the unruly behaviour of the Marcher lords associated with the many petitions and complaints made by them, and who would have returned home under the impression that the North was an area beset by violence and dispute.[17] It is no surprise then to find such negative comments against the North by contemporary commentators, the majority of whom were southern in origin.

Thus far the regions that comprised the North have been identified but just how coherent an entity was such a large area? Like many regions it had its own internal divisions, for example, Richmondshire was the hub of the Neville power whereas Northumberland was Percy territory. A. J. Pollard referred to the population of Richmondshire as having 'an

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[14] Anthony Tuck, 'The Percies and the Community of Northumberland in the Later Fourteenth Century', in Anthony Goodman and Anthony Tuck (eds), *War and Border Societies in the Middle Ages* (London: Routledge, 1992), pp. 178-195 (p. 183).
[15] King, 'Anglo-Scottish Marches', p. 47.
[16] Ibid., p. 46.
[17] Ibid., p. 42.

importance in national politics out of all proportion to their wealth and location'.[18] Helen Jewell highlighted the fact that the North itself was not politically homogenous citing the divisions between the Lancastrians of Northumberland and the Yorkists of Middleham.[19] A. J. Pollard's comprehensive study of the North-east of England during the Wars of the Roses emphasized the similarities between the North-east and other counties to the south – it was not different either geographically, economically or politically.[20] However, internally there was a contrast between the countryside and the urban centres such as York that were predominantly mercantile in nature. The cities of York and Durham were significant ecclesiastical centres where the church wielded considerable influence over their inhabitants. Economically there were great differences between the wealth of the York area and poverty of the far North-east. The sheer geographical size of the region meant that there was a diversity of political allegiance that often crossed over into national politics. This provided the region with a political vibrancy that was reflected in the active participation in politics by the population.

In attempting to assess the production and use of propaganda the presence of an integrated communications network would have been essential in such a vast region. Communication links between the North and South were quite good and regularly used and there was a frequent movement of people between the regions aided by an extensive road network that linked London to the rest of the nation, including the North of the country.[21] Stenton cited a journey from London to York that took only 6 days with the return journey taking only 5 days.[22] Many of the large landowners of the North also had estates in the South and vice versa, for example the Lords Beauchamp and Lovell had estates at Barnard Castle and Bedale respectively.[23] This naturally led to a flow between London and the north of both landowners and their servants. William Musgrave rode from Westmorland to Knole in Kent three times during one accounting year to deliver revenue from the Neville of Latimer estates.[24] There was a group of Northerners, lawyers and gentry, who regularly commuted between the

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[18] A. J. Pollard, 'The Richmondshire Community of Gentry During the Wars of the Roses', in C. Ross (ed.), *Patronage, Pedigree and Power in Later Medieval England* (Gloucester: A. Sutton, 1979), pp. 35-59 (p. 37).
[19] Jewell, *North-South Divide*, p. 96.
[20] A. J. Pollard, *North-Eastern England During the Wars of the Roses: Lay Society, War and Politics, 1450-1500* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990).
[21] F. M. Stenton, 'The Road System of Medieval England', *Economic History Review*, 7 (1936), 1-21.
[22] Stenton, 'Road System', p. 17.
[23] Pollard, *North-Eastern*, pp. 9-29.
[24] Ibid., p. 23.

north and south and likewise southerners who took the reverse journey. In May 1481, a member of the Cely family, Richard junior, went to York to see his uncle's executors and received 'great cheer' from among his old northern acquaintances.[25] The evidence confirms the established transport network that ran between the north and south, enabling political interaction and communication.

In 1398 a proclamation requesting that the duke of Norfolk should appear before the king was received and read in eighteen towns in Yorkshire within five days.[26] In 1448 a proclamation, regarding a settlement between England and Spain, was read out at several places in York revealing how news of national importance was transmitted to the provinces.[27] Civic contact with London was also regular as the citizens of York travelled to the capital to experience at first hand the intrigues of Westminster and the latest propaganda. It was agreed in April 1480:

> alderman Thomas Wrangwish will ride to London to the king's council…and that Nicholas Pereson will ride with him…with various letters written…to Richard duke of Gloucester, to the lord chancellor, the lord chamberlain…Thomas Davyson will ride to the duke of Gloucester for recorder Miles Metcalff.[28]

A town like York relied on its own observers for important political news and in 1485 despatched the serjeant at mace to Bosworth, specifically for the purpose of procuring news of the outcome of the battle.[29]

As well as civic officials, lawyers and merchants there were other travellers on the road, such as pilgrims and players. There were pilgrims from Yorkshire who travelled to shrines in other regions as recorded by the York Mercers and Merchant Adventurers in 1457: 'item, payd to Thomas Robynson for pylgramage to owr lady of Walsyngham, xijs'.[30] There were expenses for another pilgrimage to Doncaster in the same year which indicated that the merchants were

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[25]A. Hanham, *The Celys and their World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press,1985), p. 74.

[26] James A. Doig, 'Propaganda, Public Opinion and the Siege of Calais in 1436', in Rowena E. Archer (ed.), *Crown, Government and People in the Fifteenth Century* (Stroud: Alan Sutton, 1995), pp. 79-106 (p. 82).

[27] James A. Doig, 'Political Propaganda and Royal Proclamations in Late Medieval England', *HR*, LXXI (1998), 253-280. The proclamation was read at Micklegate, Ouse bridge, Savioursgate, Pavement, Foss bridge, Petersgate, Stonegate and Coney street.

[28] *York House Books*, I, p. 215.

[29] Ibid., pp. 368-9.

[30] *The York Mercers and Merchant Adventurers 1356-1917*, ed. M. Sellers, Surtees Society, 129 (Durham: Pub. for the Society by Andrews & Co.,1918), pp. 61-2.

able to mix, not only with other merchants, but also with members of religious communities and the public not involved in trade.[31] Nicholas Orme cited an example of travel by boys around the region for the celebration of Innocents Day in York when they travelled as far as Northallerton and Doncaster over a period of days.[32] In 1392 a John Berwald from Cottingham was charged with the composition of a rhyme which he had proclaimed in Beverley and Hull in a week as well as other places in the region.[33] This demonstrated that travel was not uncommon and that there were few barriers to mobility, including age, within the region.

The image of the uncivilised and isolated North appears to be largely inaccurate as people seemed to travel the length of the country quite regularly providing an opportunity for communication, including political propaganda, to be disseminated. Communication networks, both economic and social, were established and the region was regularly informed about matters both domestic and foreign.[34]

A great deal has been written on Northern politics solely in terms of the rivalries between the great affinities of Neville and Percy, often to the detriment of the study of other political activity at a more local level. Under the 'shadow of four of England's greatest landowners' was how Ralph Griffiths described Yorkshire during the mid-fifteenth century.[35] He saw the intimate rivalry and personal family issues as impacting upon the politics of the region and the nation. The ownership of large estates together with the control of the marches, gave the owner certain responsibilities, such as the ability to keep an affinity, and to control events for their own gain.[36] Thus it would be fair to say that whoever owned the land also controlled the local politics. A. J. Pollard stated that 'because of the innate might of its magnates the north-east possessed a potential to disrupt the whole of the kingdom'.[37] Local feuds had developed into monstrous proportions and it was the failure of the government to intercede in these quarrels between families, such as the Courtenay and Bonvilles of the west

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[31] *York Mercers*, p. 62.

[32] Nicholas Orme, *Medieval Children* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2001), p. 189.

[33] R. B. Dobson, *The Peasants' Revolt of 1381* ([2nd edition] Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1983), pp. 385-386.

[34] Above, p. 153, n. 2.

[35] Ralph A. Griffiths, 'Local Rivalries and National Politics: The Percies, the Nevilles, and the Duke of Exeter, 1452-55, *Speculum*, XLIII (1968), 589-632.

[36] Griffiths, 'Local Rivalries', p. 591. By the mid-fifteenth century the Percies had wardenship over the east march whilst the Nevilles had the west march. The wardenship entitled each warden to maintain retainers at the expense of the king.

[37] Pollard, *North-Eastern*, p. 403.

country, and specifically to the North, Neville and Percy, that often led to the breakdown of social order at both a local and national level.

The disturbances in Knaresborough between 1438 and 1461 were an example of the machinations of the Percy and Neville families and an instance where local groups were producing and receiving propaganda. Ruth Wilcock's examination of the events revealed that even local grievances could not be free from the interference of the Percies and Nevilles.[38] The honour of Knaresborough lay within the Duchy of Lancaster and the steward was Sir William Plumpton, a loyal Percy retainer. However, there were manors within the area, such as Scotton and Brearton that were in the ownership of the earl of Somerset and thus anti-Lancastrian in sentiment. Added to the magnate involvement was the role of the Archbishop of York, John Kemp, who held the manor and liberty of Ripon. Kemp was closely associated with Henry VI and was chancellor between 1426 and 1443 and again 1450-54. He was, however, most unpopular in the North as Wilcock discussed.[39] The increasing tension between the men of Knaresborough and Ripon due to the payment of tolls and the role of Kemp led to a serious breakdown of the status quo between Sir William Plumpton and the Archbishop.[40] Evidence of physical propaganda aimed at intimidation by both sides is telling on several occasions.[41]

In May 1443 a proclamation was sent to the sheriff of York to stop the enemies of Kemp 'going about to sow dissension among the people…to stir up…the hearts and minds of the hearers against him'.[42] However, as events continued to spiral out of control it became apparent that further intervention by Westminster was necessary and in February 1444 an order was passed that a proclamation banning any gatherings should be read in the lordship of Knaresborough.[43] What had begun as a local disagreement with locally *produced* propaganda for a local *audience* developed into a national issue that attracted the attention of Westminster. Although parochial in origin this was a further example of the Neville/Percy fight for Northern supremacy *producing* physical propaganda and causing unrest which was allowed to go

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[38] Ruth Wilcock, 'Local Disorder in the Honour of Knaresborough, c.1438-1461 and the National Context', *NH*, XLI (2004), 39-80.
[39] Ibid., pp. 47-48.
[40] Ibid., pp. 48-49.
[41] Ibid., p. 49. Wilcock stated that on '3 December 1439, a group of Ripon men ... together with 200 men were dressed "'as if for war'" in coats of mail, plate armour, swords, helmets and carrying staffs' as the rivalry between Knaresborough and Ripon escalated.
[42] *CCR,1441-1447*, pp. 143-144.
[43] Wilcock, 'Local Disorder', pp. 53-54.

unchecked due to the weak kingship of Henry VI.

However, Northern politics were more complex than just the Neville/Percy relationship. Although they both had extensive affinities, there was a large proportion of the population who in general supported the monarch rather than their local magnate. Andy King stated that although the Percies could count on the support of the gentry in attacking the Scots it was not the case when it came to opposing the king.[44] King revealed that Hotspur had little faith in his own Northumbrian supporters and had to rely on the support of disaffected Cheshiremen.[45] In 1408 when Henry Percy together with Lord Bardolf returned from Scotland in an attempt to remove Henry IV: 'the shireve of Yorke reised peple and toke theym, & smote off their hedes, and the hede off þe erle and a quarter of the lorde were sette on London Brigge'.[46] This suggests that Northumberland was not popular in Yorkshire and interestingly his head was not put up in York like that of his son Hotspur in 1403 but sent to London. This could be interpreted as sending a message to both London and Henry IV that the city of York had no affiliations with Percy, and that his head was in fact an offering of their allegiance. According to Mark Arvanigian the reigns of both Henry IV and Henry V were vital in strengthening royal influence in the region whilst the Percies were absent.[47] Henry IV sought greater control through placing Lancastrian supporters in strategic positions, with particular emphasis on the Beaufort-Neville family. However, Henry V broadened his patronage through local connections and thus ensured that what had been a troublesome region was under control so he could focus on his French aspirations. This was successful for a time but inevitably Percy animosity to the Neville ascendency developed into inter-regional conflict again. As the above has shown allegiances were flexible and not straightforward which in such a large region could lead to internal divisions which naturally made communication all the more important to the parties involved to ensure that their message was the loudest and most persuasive.

The opening quotation by Storey implied that the North was politically influential at a national level, an impression that was further enhanced by its later association with Richard

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[44] Andy King, '"They have the Hertis of the People by North": Northumberland, the Percies and Henry IV, 1399-1408', in Gwilym Dodd and Douglas Biggs (eds), *Henry IV: The Establishment of the Regime, 1399-1406* (Woodbridge: York Medieval Press, 2003), pp. 139-157 (p. 156).

[45] King, 'They have the Hertis', p. 156.

[46] *English Chronicle*, p. 38.

[47] Mark Arvanigian, 'Henry V, Lancastrian Kingship and the Far North of England', in Gwilym Dodd (ed.), *Henry V: New Interpretations* (Woodbridge: York Medieval Press in association with the Boydell Press, 2013), pp. 77-101 (p. 78).

III.[48] Ralph Griffiths writing about the Wars of the Roses highlighted that many of the strategic battles were fought in the North.[49] These battles were fought on the basis of national or dynastic disputes rather than on specifically Northern concerns. The defining battle that ended Lancastrian rule and saw Yorkist success was the battle of Towton, fought in Yorkshire. It was certainly true that although there was a Northern locus for the battle the causes were national rather than Northern. The Yorkist victory did provide the opportunity for *visual* propaganda aimed specifically at a Lancastrian *audience* based in the North as the earl of Devon was executed at York the next day and the earl of Wiltshire at Newcastle.[50] The North in this instance was an incredibly powerful tool for Yorkist propaganda, in terms of its position, in demoralising Lancastrian resistance and asserting Yorkist hegemony. The subsequent confiscation and transfer of Percy property into the hands of Warwick sought to consolidate the Neville dominance in the region and thus adulterate Lancastrian support as the region became an *audience* for the subjugation of the Lancastrians.[51] This was an integral part of Yorkist propaganda to establish their new regime in a politically important and challenging region.

There is no doubt that the region was of great strategic and thus political importance to the kingdom and this was further strengthened by the presence of the Percy and Neville estates. These two politically influential families not only controlled the local polity but were also at the forefront of national events and therefore much propaganda stemmed from their interests and ambitions.

If the Percy and Neville families were the most significant individuals in the region, then York was the most important city. This section will outline the relevance of the city in terms of communication that provided opportunities for propaganda to circulate amongst its own inhabitants and the region as a whole. As the capital of the region York during the fourteenth century had been the second city only to London. Writing in 1461 the Milanese ambassador, Prospero de Camulio, described York as 'a fine city'.[52] Barrie Dobson regarded

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[48] Above, n. 1.

[49] Ralph A. Griffiths, 'The Provinces and the Dominions in the Age of the Wars of the Roses', in Sharon D. Michalove & A. Compton Reeves (eds), *Estrangement, Enterprise and Education in Fifteenth-Century England* (Stroud: Sutton Publishing, 1998), pp. 1-25.

[50] C. Ross, *Edward IV* (London: Methuen, 1983), p. 37.

[51] Christine Carpenter, *The Wars of the Roses: Politics and the Constitution in England, c.1437-1509* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 158.

[52] *Calendar of Sate Papers and Manuscripts existing in the Archives and Collections of Milan*, ed. Allen B. Hinds (London: HMSO, 1912), p. 48.

the concept of the North as a geographical expression with York as the central pivot.[53] Dobson observed that the establishment in the late thirteenth century of an English parliament minimized the possibility of a Northern assembly being created, the inference being that the most powerful and politically minded Northerners would be attracted to London.[54] It was the seat of county administration, provided sessions of Royal justices and during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries operated two mints.[55]

Griffiths believed that York was highly coveted by both Percy and Neville families for a variety of reasons including social, political and economic.[56] Griffiths stated that the city of York actually found it prudent to befriend a variety of their powerful magnate neighbours through gifts in order to protect their own interests.[57] The Percies and Nevilles both owned inns on Walmgate, and William Latimer had an inn on Coney Street.[58] These inns would not only have provided accommodation for the family and their retainers but also an opportunity for political dialogue and the chance for the mercantile community to seek influence with these potentially powerful patrons.

York was geographically well placed, standing at a major junction of roads and rivers, for much of the economic activity for a region. It was the largest town north of the Humber in the mid-fifteenth century. The extensive river network connected the city to the Pennines in the west and the Scottish borders via either Newcastle in the east or Carlisle to the west.[59] York served as a major centre for the distribution of imported goods such as spices, dyestuffs, wine and copper that came in through the port of Hull and also the domestic produce of the area such as lead from Swaledale and wool from the Dales.[60] The variety of goods exchanged ranged from agricultural produce to Dales stockings and Kendal cloth which necessitated the meeting

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[53] Barrie Dobson, 'The Northern Province in the Later Middle Ages', *NH*, XLII (2005), 49-60.

[54] Dobson, 'Northern Province', p. 52.

[55] J. H. Moran, *Education and Learning in the City of York 1300-1560*, Borthwick Papers, 55 (York: University of York, 1979), p. 2.

[56] Griffiths, 'Local Rivalries', p. 590.

[57] Ibid., p. 597.

[58] E. Miller, 'Medieval York', in *A History of the County of York: The City of York*, ed. P. M. Tillott, Victoria History of the Counties England (Oxford: Oxford University Press,1961), pp. 25-116 (pp. 84-91).

[59] J. N. Bartlett, 'The Expansion and Decline of York in the Later Middle Ages', *Economic History Review*, 12, new series (1959), 17-33 (p. 18).

[60] Bartlett, 'Expansion and Decline', p. 19.

of people from different geographical and social backgrounds.[61] Markets were regularly held twice a week within York and there were separate markets for the foreign traders, that is, those living outside the city.[62] Trade flourished through these fairs, markets and shops which inevitably provided suitable conditions for the exchange of news as well as goods. These gatherings provided the opportunity for the proclamation of official news as well as local gossip. In May 1383 the sheriff of York received notice from the king: 'to cause proclamation to be made divers times on fair days and market days of the king's will'.[63] The markets and fairs would have provided Ellul's isolated farmer with the opportunity to come into contact with news including propaganda.[64]

The coastal trade that existed, particularly from Hull up the Ouse to York, was also important. Wendy Childs showed that London ships were recorded in the Hull customs records, admittedly not many, but the opportunity to receive news from the south was there.[65] The reverse trip with Northern ships sailing to London would likewise have provided suitable opportunities along with the presence of foreign shipping. The merchants of York had an increasing number of debts with London merchants which J. Kermode saw as a reflection of the growing interest of Londoners in Northern trade.[66] The increase in the woollen industry of the West Riding led to the export of cloth via London which adversely affected the trade in York. In fact there was evidence of a growing tension between the northern wool merchants and those of London as described in the accounts of 1478 from the York Merchant Adventurers: 'thai ar compelled to have the places for the utterance of the clothe in stretes joynyng nyghe the marchandise of London, to thentent that the clothe of the north parties sall apere wers, and their clothe to apere the better'.[67] The York textile trade also had to face the increasing competition from the West Riding which led to an economic decline. Pollard emphasized the problems that the economic and agrarian downturns had on both the population and the

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[61] D. M. Palliser, 'A Crisis in English Towns? The Case of York 1460-1640', *NH*, XIV (1978), 108-25 (p. 111).

[62] H. Richardson, *The Medieval Fairs and Markets of York*, St. Anthony's Hall Publications, 20 (York: St. Anthony's Press, 1961), p. 24.

[63] *CCR,1381-1385*, p. 308.

[64] Above, p. 25, n. 16.

[65] *The Custom Accounts of Hull, 1453-1490*, ed. Wendy Childs, Yorkshire Archaeological Society, Record Series, CXLIV (1986), p. 132.

[66] J. I. Kermode, 'The Merchants of York, Beverley and Hull in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries' (Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Sheffield, 1990), p. 203.

[67] *York Mercers*, p. 77

magnates in both rural and urban settings.[68]

As well as a political and economic centre for Yorkshire, York was an important ecclesiastical centre. Barrie Dobson perceived that the archbishops of York, as servants of the monarchy, were more connected to Westminster than the city of York particularly as the position was often a 'reward for chancellors or ex-chancellors'.[69] This strong bond between Westminster and the archbishop meant that they were unable to exert much independent political will in the region and if they did try it could end in disaster as the execution of Scrope proved.[70] York Minster was not only an important religious space but it also provided a significant visual space for dynastic propaganda that was intended to communicate to a Northern *audience*. York Minster as the regional church was appropriated for dynastic propaganda for an urban *audience*. This time it was at the initiation of Thomas Langley, who commissioned a window in the south-east transept which reinforced the Lancastrian dynasty whilst confirming Langley's connection with the régime. The window was an example of the Minster providing the surroundings for an *audience* to witness the apparent legitimacy of the Lancastrians and to commit this visual history to memory.[71] During the tenure of Archbishop Kemp this Lancastrian propaganda was further enforced with the construction of the choir screen. It shows a series of representations of the kings of England, including Edward III through to Henry VI, further acknowledging the place of the Lancastrian dynasty in the chronology of English history.[72] This was during a time of upheaval and unrest within the realm and Kemp was probably hoping to emphasise the legitimacy of the Lancastrian dynasty whilst securing his own legacy.

As stated in the opening chapter, education was necessary for propaganda to be successful.[73] Education was well provided for in York with St Peter's school and the nearby Acaster College. Robert Stillington recognised the need for education and established at Acaster, York a school employing three masters to teach respectively grammar, music and 'the third to teche to Write and all such things as belonged to Scrivener Craft to all manner of

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[68] Pollard, stated that 'economic recession, in short, exacerbated political tensions', *North-Eastern*, p. 399.
[69] Dobson, 'Northern Province', p. 54. Dobson stated that the bishopric of Durham was a reward for the keepers of the privy seal.
[70] Ibid., pp. 53-4.
[71] Brown, *'Our Magnificent Fabrick'*, pp. 231-232.
[72] Ibid., p. 233.
[73] Above, p. 26, n. 19.

persons within the realm of England'.[74] Due to poor documentation it is hard to establish exactly the level of educational provision within the city of York but J. Moran stated that it continued to be a centre for grammar school level education for the North of England.[75] As has been discussed York had a large mercantile community who were increasingly well educated in order to conduct their business.[76]

At the end of the fourteenth century the merchants of York were the political force behind civic affairs and free from Percy or Neville influence unlike the later events at Knaresborough.[77] In 1380 there was an uprising which was the result of urban disquiet. Christian Liddy concurred with Mark Ormrod that the issues of royal and civic finance together with the city's complicated internal politics led to the 1380 uprising.[78] The increasing burden of royal demands for war expenditure combined with internal urban financial disquiet led to the mayor, John de Gysburn, being hounded out of the city on 26 November 1380 by a group of rebels. The same rebels then besieged York's guildhall, the centre of civic government, and appointed their choice of mayor, Simon de Quixlay. This appeared to be a well-orchestrated event, and the rebels declared that whenever they had new proclamations to be read the bells on Ouse Bridge would be rung 'aukeward'.[79] This was the method chosen by the rebels to disseminate their propaganda to the mostly urban *audience*. The motivation behind the rebellion was that the commons felt that the civic government was not representing or governing well for the common good. This event indicated that the York urban population assumed that they could and indeed did influence local politics to the betterment of their position.

The disturbances at York were noted at Westminster as recorded on the Parliament Rolls: 'they continue to perform their evil and terrible deeds ... to the destruction of the said city'.[80] The roll then asked that the earl of Northumberland should gather a party to investigate

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[74] J. W. Adamson, 'The Extent of Literacy in England in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries', *The Library*, 4th ser., X (1930), 163-193 (p. 175).

[75] Moran, *Education and Learning*, p. 2.

[76] See above, pp. 163-5.

[77] See above, pp. 160-1.

[78] Christian D. Liddy, *War, Politics and Finance in Late Medieval English Towns: Bristol, York and the Crown, 1350-1400* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2005), p. 43.

[79] Liddy, *War, Politics and Finance*, p. 90.

[80] 'Richard II: November 1380', Parliament Rolls of Medieval England.URL://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=116480 Date accessed: 26 September 2010.pp. 17-18

the events at York and that the leaders of the rebellion should be rounded up immediately.[81] The matter had by now reached an external *audience* and the king called for a proclamation to be read in the city calling for the citizens to be obedient to the mayor 'so that none can excuse himself on the grounds of ignorance'.[82] This was an occasion when the local *audience* became national when it came to the attention of parliament. The propaganda, although *produced* internally had arisen out of a mixture of both local disputes and the burden of national taxation. This was, for the period, a rare occasion when the influence of either Neville or Percy does not appear to have been involved – it was very much an internal political response by the citizens of York. Significantly, these events in York preceded the Peasants' Revolt by six months and suggest that Northern politics led the way in expressing popular opposition to taxation.[83]

The success of the York merchants inevitably led to their increased political power and their taking over the lead from the older landed families in the urban centres. Barrie Dobson said 'this was a city which had no need to treat Yorkshire gentry or even Yorkshire magnates with excessive awe'.[84] Mark Ormrod considered that the urban uprisings of York, Scarborough and Beverley in 1381 were the result of local problems and that towns were 'primarily preoccupied with their own often tumultuous internal affairs'.[85] During the risings of 1380-1381 Richard II regarded these towns as potential hot spots of unrest.[86] The city of York, with its powerful mercantile class, was very much independent in thought and deed when it came to politics and safeguarding its own interests.

Christian Liddy regarded the involvement of the craft guilds and the commons in the politics of the city as a vital component in its unique independence of spirit and ability and infrastructure to organise successful political opposition to the established hierarchy of class structure.[87] Its confidence and independence derived from a successful and thriving economy

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[81] Ibid.

[82] Ibid.

[83] C. Liddy, 'Urban Conflict in Late Fourteenth-Century England: The Case of York in 1380-1', *EHR*, 118 (2003), 1-23 (p. 27).

[84] R. B. Dobson, 'Cathedral Chapters and Cathedral Cities: York, Durham and Carlisle in the Fifteenth Century', *NH*, XIX (1983), 15-44 (p. 34).

[85] W. M. Ormrod, *Political Life in Medieval England 1300-1450* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1995), p. 45.

[86] R. B. Dobson, 'The Risings in York, Beverley and Scarborough, 1380-1381', in R. H. Hilton and T. H. Aston (eds), *The English Rising of 1381* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), pp. 112-142 (p. 115).

[87] Christian D. Liddy, 'Popular Politics in the Late Medieval City: York and Bruges', *EHR*, CXXVIII (2013), 771-805.

based on the wool trade of the early fourteenth century. This economic success story however, started to decline by the end of the fourteenth century and during the next century York was gradually superceded in the textile industry by the West Riding. The city although economically impoverished still held its political prominence due to its strategic position and later through its patronage by Richard III.

It may be pertinent at this stage to consider York's political influence as reflected through its relationship with the crown and in particular to focus on political communication during the reigns of Richard II and Richard III.

A great deal has been written about the relationship between Richard II and the city of York.[88] Richard's moving of government to York in May 1392 has been cited as evidence of his fondness for the city however, it probably had more to do with the breakdown of his relationship, both political and financial, with London.[89] This event could be regarded as pitting the North against the South with Richard regarding London as an *audience* for his propaganda to show them his displeasure with their behaviour. York could be viewed as having been used unwittingly in this process to bring the Londoners back in line. Perhaps this may be too cynical a view but nevertheless it worked and showed that York was regarded seriously as a potential threat to the pre-eminence of London. There was an implicit suggestion that the North could compete politically for the king and court. Given-Wilson cited the increased number of Richard's knights that were drawn from the North as a sign that he was trying to court favour with the region. Nigel Saul argued that Richard favoured York no more than other cities but it fitted into his plan to create various regional centres.[90] However, his patronage of the minster was significant and genuine and probably led to the employment of so many Northern clerks in his household. Both Thomas Arundel and Richard Scrope served as chancellor and diplomat

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[88] C. M. Barron, 'The Quarrel of Richard II with London, 1392-7', in F. R. H. Boulay and C. Barron (eds), *The Reign of Richard II: Essays in Honour of May McKisack* (London: Athlone Press, 1971), pp. 173-201; J. H. Harvey, 'Richard II and York', in Boulay and Barron (eds), *Reign of Richard II*, pp. 202-17; Saul, 'Richard II', in Rees Jones (ed.), *Government of Medieval York*, pp. 1-13.

[89] Christian D. Liddy, 'The Rhetoric of the Royal Chamber in Late Medieval London, York and Coventry', *Urban History*, 29, 3 (2002), 323-349 (p. 332). Liddy cites the fact that the city of London had ceased to lend Richard money and the city was itself in a state of chaos. However, three months later the situation had improved enough for Richard to return to the capital. See Saul, 'Richard II', in Rees Jones (ed.), *Government of Medieval York*, pp. 1-13 (p. 13).

[90] Saul, 'Richard II', p. 9.

respectively.[91] His donations to the rebuilding resulted in his badge of a white hart being carved on a capital for all to see and to remind York of his patronage.[92] Richard's reign proved noteworthy for the city of York through his presence and patronage. However, by 1399 York was lending money to Henry Bolingbroke probably due to Richard's excessive financial demands.[93] This was repaid by Henry, when king, to the city of York in July 1400: 'repayment of 500 marks lent by them to the king in his necessity before he undertook the governance of the realm and received by him in person'.[94] The citizens of York were perceptive enough to realise that Richard's regime was in decline and they needed to look to their future welfare.

The granting of a royal charter to York in 1396 by Richard II provided the city with the privilege of self-government.[95] The granting of the charter in itself revealed the self-determination of the citizens in obtaining the charter through petitioning the king.[96] York provided a base for diplomatic discussions between the king and Scotland but Ormrod suggested that the Hundred Years War drew the political focus away from the North and York, to London and its proximity to France. He further speculated that by the end of the fourteenth century Calais had become the second city to London rather than York.[97]

Towards the end of the fifteenth century the city was still of major political importance to the crown. Richard's re-coronation that took place in York in August 1483 was indicative of his relationship with the city itself and his strong connection with his Northern affinity, and as such was a strategic *audience* for this *visual* propaganda at the beginning of his reign.[98] York was a vital *audience* for Richard III and in an appeal to the citizens of York on 15 June 1483, he requested their help against the queen, Elizabeth Woodville: 'assiste us ayanst the Quiene

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[91] Ibid., pp. 9-10.
[92] Ibid., p. 10.
[93] Liddy, *Bishopric of Durham*, p. 214.
[94] *CPR, 1399-1401*, p. 357. See also p. 354 for the initial loan from York and another from the city of Hull.
[95] Nigel Saul, 'Richard II and the City of York', in Sarah Rees Jones (ed.), *The Government of Medieval York: Essays in Commemoration of the 1396 Charter* (York: University of York, Borthwick Studies in History 3, 1997), pp. 1-13 (p.1).
[96] Saul, 'Richard II and the City of York', pp. 7-8.
[97] W. M. Ormrod, 'Competing Capitals? York and London in the Fourteenth Century', in Sarah Rees Jones, Richard Marks and A. J. Minnis (eds), *Courts and Regions in Medieval Europe* (Woodbridge: York Medieval Press in association with the Boydell Press, 2000), pp. 75-98 (pp. 96-7).
[98] See Pamela Tudor-Craig, 'Richard III's Triumphant Entry into York, August 29th, 1483', in R. Horrox (ed.), *Richard III and the North*, Studies in Regional & Local History, no.6 (Hull: 1985), pp. 108-116.

...which entended and daly doith intend, to murder and utterly distroy us and our cosyn, the duc of Bukkyngham'.[99] The city responded 'with cc horsmen, defensably arayd,' to travel to London.[100] Only a few weeks later it was Buckingham who was seen as a traitor and from the *York House Books* it was possible to see an example of Richard III's propagandist appeal to the citizens of York in his fight against Buckingham in 1483.[101] On 13 October 1483 John Oter returned from the king in London with a letter declaring that the duke of Buckingham was a traitor: 'the deuce of Bukyngham traitoursly contrary to hys legiaunce is turnyd ayanst our said lord the kyng'.[102] Richard III was asking the mayor to gather a number of men together and come to him at Leicester, he was *agitating* them into action. The mayor and council agreed to this and sent Thomas Wrangwish as the captain.

In response to this plea to meet Richard in one week's time at Leicester, the mayor and councillors agreed to send as many people as possible under the leadership of Thomas Wrangwish. A letter of October 1483 from Edward Plumpton to Sir Robert Plumpton reported that 'messengers commyth dayly, both from the king's grace and the Duke into this county'.[103] This letter is particularly significant as it was written on the day that the Duke of Buckingham openly appeared in arms against Richard III at Brecknock. It is interesting to note that both sides obviously realised the importance of trying to influence a Northern *audience*. At Bosworth, however, the failure of Stanley and Northumberland to fight ultimately cost Richard the throne and his life thus 'it was the north that betrayed Richard at Bosworth'.[104] In the end, it could be said that, it was the North that caused the downfall of the Yorkist dynasty.

Thus, it is apparent that York's position, both economically and politically, was to have a two-fold effect on the region. First, the established communication system ensured that the North was in touch with events at Westminster and second, it could be seen as a broadcaster of news via the flow of people passing through the city. It was effectively a centre for information gathering and dissemination for the North as London was for the south. The mix of magnate and mercantile interests meant that the city was in many ways a Northern microcosm of its larger cousin, London. Added together with the power of its ecclesiastical establishment, York

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[99] *York Civic Records*, ed. A. Raine, Yorkshire Archaeological Society Record Series, XCVIII (1938), p. 73.
[100] *York Civic Records*, p. 74.
[101] *York House Books*, I, p. 296.
[102] Ibid., p. 296
[103] *Plumpton*, p. 60.
[104] Carpenter, *Wars*, p. 218.

was in many ways exceptionally positioned to express its power, within the North itself, and also over domestic politics.

The other major city in the region was Durham ruled over by the Bishop of Durham. Its geographical position made it strategically important as a buffer should the rest of Northumberland fall to the Scots. The east of the palatinate provided rich farmlands and the majority of the wealthy families were to be found in this area. Liddy regarded this area as being essentially the same as many areas in southern and central England in terms of its manorialised regime.[105] Whilst the barren west was the source of what was to become the lucrative coal fields of the region. The palatinate had its own Chancery, Exchequer, court system and mint and perhaps more importantly was not represented at Westminster, unlike York. This meant that the city remained independent of Westminster dictats and more importantly, taxes. Although the bishop was appointed by the monarch, and often had been a chancellor, and was in many ways the king's representative in the region, the bishops were fiercely loyal to the palatinate and their 'flock'. The king had less influence in Durham than in the palatinate of Chester where the earl was a member of the royal family. The bishop was the main landowner in the palatinate which strengthened his position against the encroachment of powerful landowning families such as the Nevilles, at least until the fifteenth century. Although Durham was an important city the emphasis in this thesis will be placed on an examination of York and its role in the politics of the North in the late medieval period.

In order to find examples of political propaganda at a regional level two Northern sources will be examined; the *York House Books* and the *Plumpton Letters*. First, through the examination of documents contained in the *York House Books* a picture of urban politics at both a local and national level emerges.[106] These documents identified the flow of communication that existed between not only the city and the capital but also leading nobles. Covering the later period of the Wars of the Roses, the *York House Books* of the period 1461-1490 provide a selection of letters and although not representative still provide evidence of communication, not only between York and London but also between York and other regional magnates.[107] Sarah Rees Jones regarded these civic texts, like the *Coventry Leet Book*, as an indication of the 'expanding culture of civic literacy…but also enabled new forms of political

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[105] Liddy, *Bishopric of Durham*, pp. 40-41.
[106] *York House Books*, I.
[107] *York House Books*, I.

activity'.[108] Rees Jones emphasised the need for 'good conversation' which was a reflection of the increased political awareness and the need for social engagement within the polity.[109]

In the period 1476-1479 a mere 1% of the extant documents from either the king or magnates related to issues of national importance but 6% of their correspondence was of a local or civic nature. Between 1480 and 1486 the percentages are 2% and 5% respectively, the slight increase in national letters may be a reflection of the political unrest that existed in the mid-1480's. Although these percentages are small it is important to remember that letters relating to civic matters would be more numerous. The appendices, with fewer documents, reveal a higher percentage of letters relating to national matters, for example, in appendix II, of the 15 documents 47% are national in tone relating mostly to the raising of troops to fight the Scots, confirming that Yorkshire, and York in particular was an important *audience* for propaganda.[110] In June 1476 John Eglesfelde, esquire, rode to the earl of Northumberland with a letter from the mayor in response to one received from the earl.[111] This letter was dealing with the issue of a clerk, Thomas Yotten who had been accused of dishonesty and the *House Books* reveal that a considerable number of letters were generated and circulated concerning this matter. These letters were read out and debated, a part of the increasing aurality that Rees Jones saw as an attempt by the civic administrators to engage in the formation of public opinion outside the council chamber.[112] In July 1476 letters to be sent to the king, duke of Gloucester and lords Hastings and Stanley regarding Thomas Yotten: 'were read aloud and declared true'.[113]

From these examples it is possible to see just how an efficient communications network between the North and south allowed York to play an integral part in national politics. The

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[108] Sarah Rees Jones, 'Emotions, speech, and the art of politics in fifteenth-century York: *House Books*, mystery plays and Richard duke of Gloucester', *Urban History*, 44, 4 (2017), 586-603 (p. 586).

[109] Rees Jones, 'Emotions, speech and the art of politics', p. 593. The need for 'good conversation' resulted in the development of smaller meeting rooms in buildings such as the Mercers' Hall in Fossgate – see p. 597.

[110] Appendix II in the *House Books* is a selection of 15 examples of correspondence from the king, duke of Gloucester and Henry Percy mostly relating to the Scottish campaign of 1480-82. This does present a top heavy impression of a series of royal and magnate correspondence but does nonetheless still have value in revealing the importance of the role of the city in a campaign against the Scots and thus the security of the country.

[111] *York House Books*, I, p. 44

[112] Rees Jones, 'Emotions, speech and the art of politics', pp. 591, 596.

[113] *York House Books*, I, pp. 50-1.

mayor and council of York sought advice and in turn received it, whether from Westminster or from magnates such as the earls of Northumberland. It appeared to be a mature and reciprocal relationship that ensured that both parties knew what was going on at Westminster and at a local level.

In April 1485 Richard III wrote to the city complaining 'that diverse sedicious and evil disposed personnes ... sowe sede of noise and disclaundre agaynest our persone'.[114] Richard then detailed the methods of propaganda being used by his adversaries before calling on the mayor to arrest anyone caught speaking ill of the king or posting up sedicious bills and finally warning that if they fail it will be 'at your extremme perill'.[115] From this it may be concluded that this propaganda being produced was quite comprehensive and the city council was unable to control it. It also revealed that Richard had excellent communication sources within the city who reported not only the propaganda but the exact methods being employed. Finally, Richard who appeared to feel let down by a city that he had close relations with openly threatened the mayor that if it was not contained then there would be serious repercussions. Richard sounded like he had been betrayed in a region where his major supporters were suggesting that his popularity was waning within his own power base.

Despite the limitations of the *York House Books*, in terms of time period and mercantile bias, they still provide valuable evidence of the flow of news between York and London and other areas. They reveal the relationship of Richard duke of Gloucester as lieutenant of the North and as king and his role in the civic affairs of the city. In March 1482 the city prepared to welcome the duke of Gloucester to give him 'a laudable thanke for his gude and benevolent lordship that he at all tymez have had unto this cite'.[116] The letters that related to national matters tended to be concerned with raising troops for the war with the Scots and the declaration of the duke of Buckingham as a traitor, all from the early 1480's. Rees Jones regarded the *York House Books* as part of a 'new Yorkist political culture founded upon a heightened awareness of the political importance of good conversation'.[117] The books confirm the importance of York, both as a political *audience* and as a geographically strategically important city in the region.

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[114] Ibid., pp. 359-360.

[115] Ibid., pp. 359-360. He cites 'setting up of billes, messages, bold opne spech' as three of the methods used.

[116] Ibid., pp. 250-1.

[117] Rees Jones, 'Emotions, speech and the art of politics', pp. 602-6.

In contrast to the civic correspondence of the *York House Books* the Plumptons of Knaresborough provide the historian with an insight into the importance of national affairs to a Northern gentry family and the role of magnate allegiance. Due to their Percy connections, involvement in local politics and their litigious nature, the correspondence is broad with both familial and official letters recorded. The Plumptons were an ancient family with modest estates in Knaresborough, Grassington, Idle, Steeton and Studley. Their prospects improved considerably with the marriage of Sir Robert to Alice Foljambe who brought with her considerable estates in Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire and Staffordshire. The family came to the attention of the nation and thus the chroniclers when Sir William was executed in York for his involvement in Scrope's rebellion of 1405 and his head was displayed on Micklegate Bar. Despite their support for the Percies the king was lenient with them and they continued with their rise up the social ladder through strategic marriages which increased their estates and their reputation for litigation. Their political affinity to the Percies caused Sir William to be removed from the commission of the peace in August 1460. However, undaunted and with a true skill for self- preservation he agreed to pay Edward IV a sum of £2,000 as a sign of good behaviour. Unfortunately, despite his connections he failed to raise the sum and spent almost eight months in the Tower as a result. He was later accused of treason and again was pardoned.[118] Sir William continued to display political pragmatism by supporting the earl of Warwick when strategically expedient whilst remaining a Lancastrian at heart. When he was replaced as steward of the honor of Knaresborough by Sir William Gascoigne on the orders of Henry Percy in the early 1470's this must have tested his loyalty. A letter from circa 1470 from Henry Percy to Sir William reveals the mutuality of their relationship, when Percy is asking for the bailship of Sessay for Edmund Cape: 'My trust is in you that, the rather for this mine instance & contemplation, ye will fulfil this my desire, and I will be as well-willed to doe thinge for your pleasure'.[119]

Sir William's son Robert supported the Percies and was rewarded with a knighthood in 1481 from the earl of Northumberland after a Scottish campaign. Over the period 1433-1485 of Sir Edward Plumpton's Letter Book, 20% of the letters related to national events rather than just the familial or legal.[120] The letters reveal that communication between Knaresborough and London and other parts of the country was extensive.

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[118] *Plumpton*, p. 259.
[119] Ibid., pp. 45-6.
[120] Ibid., pp. 24-64.

The Plumptons' lawyers would have regularly travelled to London and their other estates around the country and would have heard the latest local and national news which was then reported back to the Plumptons. In December 1468 Godfrey Greene, lawyer, wrote from London to Sir William Plumpton of recent events 'my Lord of Oxford is comitt to the tower, and it is said kept in irons, and that he has confessed myche thinge'.[121] Thomas Middleton, another lawyer and son-in-law of Sir William, in a letter of 1466 to Sir William when talking about the whereabouts of certain magnates said 'the king, my lord chauncler, and the earle of Warwick ar at London; he came to the towne with 3 horse and more'.[122] An example of the Plumptons as an *audience* for propaganda may be found in a letter from Henry VI, written at York in March 1460/1 to Sir William urging or *agitating* him to defend the king against the following of the late Earl of March by coming to his assistance wherever he may be: 'the late earle of Mearch hath made great assemblies of riotouse and mischeously disposed people; and to stirr and prouocke them to draw vnto him he hath cried in his proclamations hauok vpon all our trew liege people and subiects, theire wiues, children & goods'.[123] This of course was written only a couple of weeks before the decisive battle of Towton, where William junior lost his life fighting for the Lancastrians, which resulted in Yorkist victory. The proximity to Scotland meant that the Plumptons were called on to support their king in defence of the border on numerous occasions. In December 1480 Northumberland wrote to Robert Plumpton asking for his support: 'therfore on the king owr soueraigne lords behalf I charg you, and also on myne as wardeyn,…be with me at Topcliffe vppon Munday'.[124] Buckingham's rebellion in 1483 was of great concern to the Plumptons, as recorded in a letter from Edward Plumpton to Sir Robert in October of that year: 'I trust that he shalbe right withstanded & all his mallice. Messingers comyth dayly both from the kings grace & the duke into this county'.[125] Although the county here was Lancashire it demonstrates the activity by both parties in attempting to influence a Northern *audience*.

Due to their prominent position in the North and the vicissitudes of the politics of the Wars of the Roses the Plumptons provided a picture of a Northern society that was very much at the heart of politics if not at the centre of Westminster. The letters confirm that communication between the North and the rest of the country was efficient and thus news was

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[121] Ibid., pp. 39-40.
[122] Ibid., p. 38.
[123] Ibid., p. 26.
[124] Ibid., pp.55-56, 57.
[125] Ibid., pp. 60-61.

easily obtained. Their political connections and aspirations meant that they were often an *audience* for propaganda, whether local or national, as their involvement was often called upon. Likewise, the *York House Books* exhibit the relationship between the city, local magnate influence and Westminster and the regular communication that existed between all the parties. The *York House Books* and the *Plumpton* letters provide evidence from both a Northern civic and, family perspective that reveal the North as an active political *audience* during the period of the Wars of the Roses. They also contrast the interests between an urban mercantile and rural land orientated gentry standpoint. Both sources demonstrate political awareness and involvement at a regional and national level indicating that late fifteenth-century politics were being discussed, acted upon and recorded in the regions and that there was the development of a mutually reciprocal relationship between crown, magnate, gentry and merchant.

Now that it has been established that the region was well served in terms of communication networks it will be examined first, as the *subject* of propaganda by others, that is, contemporary views of the region, second, as a *producer* of propaganda and as an *audience* for propaganda through the use of two case studies.

The North as a subject of propaganda.

Over the centuries, a conventional view of the North as uneducated, socially inferior and warlike became accepted. It is therefore important to consider how the region was regarded by its southern contemporaries during the later medieval period. In other words how was the North treated as a *subject* of propaganda? In 1378 the *St. Albans Chronicle* wrote of the 'stupidity and arrogance of the Northumbrians' when they were attacked by the Scots.[126] Polydore Vergil apparently thought that Northerners were less civilised, although he was heavily influenced by anti-Yorkist Tudor propaganda rather than fact.[127] Richard II's fondness for his Cheshire affinity was ill-regarded by the rest of the country, writing in 1397 the *St. Albans Chronicle* referred to them as 'criminals brought together from the county of Cheshire ... who were bestial by nature, and ready to perpetrate any wicked act'.[128] By the mid-fifteenth century however, under the guidance of Henry VI and Margaret of Anjou, it was the men of Durham, Northumberland and Yorkshire who were regarded as lawless and violent. After the battle of Wakefield the *English Chronicle* complained of the behaviour of the Northerners

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[126] *St. Albans*, I, p. 233.
[127] Polydore Vergil, *The Anglica Historia*, ed. D. Hay, CS, third series, LXXIV (1950), p. 11.
[128] *St. Albans*, I, p. 77.

referring to them as: 'paynemes or Sarracenes, and no Crysten men'.[129] In 1460 prince Edward wrote to the city of London to allay their fears about the Northerners: 'ye nor noon of you shalbe robbed, despoiled nor wronged by any personne that shall at that tyme come with us'.[130] In January 1461 Clement Paston wrote to his brother John warning him of the army being led by Margaret of Anjou 'for the pepill in the northe robbe and styll, and ben apoynted to pill all thys cuntre'.[131] Prior to the battle of Towton in March 1461 *Ingulph's Chronicle* refered to 'the wretched northmen…were compelled, much against their will, to leave behind them the booty which they had collected in various places'.[132] The bishop of Salisbury, Richard Beauchamp echoed the comments by the author of *Ingulph's Chronicle* when writing to Francesco Coppini: 'We, however, were harassed by fear of utter destruction until the northerners with their captive king returned straggling northwards'.[133]

After the second battle of St. Albans *Gregory's Chronicle* recorded that even King Henry VI and Margaret realized that their Northern army would have wreaked havoc on London and kept them at York: 'for they demyde that the Northeryn men wolde have ben to cruelle in robbyng yf they hadde come to London'.[134] This suggests that the army was not well organized or disciplined despite being a traditional affinity, and that the king had little control over it. All of these examples cast the North in an unfavourable light and unfortunately any positive references are negligible. As the *subject* of propaganda the North was portrayed in such a fashion as to often *agitate* the south against it. King argued that much of this fear was constructed by and contained in Yorkist *agitation* propaganda 'it struck a chord amongst its southern audience, suggesting that the idea of the northerners as a potential threat to the south was already well established by the 1460's'.[135]

The paucity of Northern chronicles leaves us rather in the dark as to the attitude of the North to the south. The contemporary and near contemporary views cited above created an image of the North that was largely inaccurate but was perpetuated for several centuries. King

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[129] *English Chronicle*, p. 97.
[130] *John Vale's Book*, pp. 142-143.
[131] *PL*, III, pp. 249-50.
[132] *Ingulph's Chronicle of the Abbey of Croyland*, trans. Henry T. Riley (London: Henry G. Bohn, 1854), p. 425.
[133] *Calendar of State Papers and Manuscripts existing in the Archives and Collections of Milan*, ed. Allen B. Hinds (London: HMSO, 1912), p. 63.
[134] *Historical Collections* (1876), p. 214.
[135] King, 'Anglo-Scottish Marches', p. 41.

concluded that the negative portrayal of the North during the Wars of the Roses was due to the influence of Yorkist propaganda conveyed by the predominantly southern chroniclers.[136]

The North as a producer of and as an audience for propaganda.

In order to examine the North as both *producer* of and *audience* for propaganda these two criteria will be examined in conjunction as they were often integrated. In this section examples of propaganda specific to the North will be examined and from this the intention will be to show that the North was familiar with using a variety of propaganda which was employed with varying degrees of success. The region was both a *producer* and was itself perceived as politically important enough to be an *audience* for propaganda. It was an *audience* both externally, that is for official propaganda, and internally, in the case of local disputes. Two of the main conspirators of the Southampton Plot of 1415 were from the Northern nobility and gentry, Henry, Lord Scrope of Masham and Sir Thomas Grey of Heaton in Northumberland. Their Northern connection was emphasised by Scrope's head being displayed on Micklegate Bar in York, whilst Grey's head was sent to Newcastle.[137]

> the heads of Henry Lescrope of Masham and Thomas Gray of Heton, who for treason against the king and their allegiance were by judgment against them rendered condemned to death and beheaded, and to the sheriffs of the city of York to set the said Henry's head upon a spear until further order in the place within that city appointed, and to the sheriff of Newcastle to set the head of the said Thomas likewise within that town.[138]

Despite the event occurring in the south Henry made sure that it was their home region that were the *audience* for his displeasure. Through the use of *visual* propaganda Henry sent out a firm message that despite his imminent departure for France he was very much in control of domestic affairs.

In contrast Richard III's entry into York on 29th August 1483 was the culmination of a progress which had begun in July taking Richard through towns such as Tewkesbury, Warwick, Leicester and Coventry. The *Crowland Chronicle* revealed Richard's desire for visual

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[136] Ibid., pp. 38, 49. King stated that Southern prejudice against the North was unheard of prior to the fifteenth century.

[137] Allmand, *Henry V*, p. 77.

[138] 'Close Rolls, Henry V: August 1415', in *Calendar of Close Rolls, Henry V: Volume 1, 1413-1419*, ed. A. E. Stamp (London, 1929), pp. 226-227. *British History Online* http://www.british-history.ac.uk/cal-close-rolls/hen5/vol1/pp226-227 [accessed 4 June 2016].

approbation in his Northern homeland:

> Wishing therefore to display in the North, where he had spent most of his time previously, the superior royal rank, which he had acquired for himself in this manner, as diligently as possible, he left the royal city of London and passing through Windsor, Oxford and Coventry came at length to York. There, on a day appointed for the repetition of his crowning in the metropolitan church ... he arranged splendid and highly expensive feasts and entertainments to attract to himself the affection of many people.[139]

Richard's crowning in the North concluded an extensive programme of *integration* propaganda that had taken him through the heart of the country. Richard realised, as a usurper, the necessity and value of appearing before his people and physically emphasising his kingship and legitimacy even within his own power-base. This event was probably meant to communicate his loyalty to the North and that in many respects he regarded York as important as a city as London. In 1484 York was an *audience* once more for Richard's *visual* propaganda when he wore his crown again.[140] This act was designed to visually enforce his strong connection with the region and showed the rest of the kingdom that he was not going to forget his Northern roots. This would have further incensed the south who he had already irked with his distribution of southern estates to Northern favourites: 'to the shame of all the southern people who murmured ceaselessly and longed … for the return of their old lords in place of the tyranny of the present ones'.[141]

It was particularly in its role as an *audience*, both positively and negatively, that the political significance of the North was crucial, with certain events critically affecting the course of late medieval English history.

Case Study 1: Henry IV and the North of England.

In 1403 Henry Percy famously wrote to Henry IV:

> Thou spoileste yerly the reame with taxes and talleges. Thou payeste no man, þou holdeste no house. Thou arte not heire off the reame, and þerfor as I haue hurte þe reame in bryngynge in off the, I woll helpe to refourme yt yff I may.[142]

This quotation revealed the dissatisfaction that the Percies felt with Henry IV after they had allowed him to travel through their region and ultimately to take the throne. This case study

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[139] *Crowland*, p. 161.
[140] Above, p. 89, n. 150.
[141] *Crowland*, p. 171.
[142] *English Chronicle*, p. 33.

will contribute to an understanding of how propaganda was received and produced in the region during a key period of dynastic upheaval.

Henry's Northern connections were rooted in his father's Lancastrian palatinate where Henry was appointed warden during John of Gaunt's foreign forays.[143] The Lancastrian affinity of John of Gaunt had strong regional affiliations within Yorkshire and had established relationships with leading families such as the Scropes and Fitzhughs.[144] The influence of the affinity on the region could be seen in its representation in the Commons with Lancastrian servants returned to 21 seats in Yorkshire between 1369 and 1397.[145]

Henry's landing in Yorkshire could have been down to serendipity or strategic planning as Castor referred to Yorkshire as 'one of the greatest centres of Duchy territorial interest outside the palatinate'.[146] Henry had travelled up the coast, checking out various possible landing areas but carried on northwards where perhaps he hoped to find a more favourable welcome. Given-Wilson suggested that the choice of landing could have been influenced by its proximity to Bridlington, location of the shrine of Henry's favourite saint, John, providing the opportunity for spiritual assistance for his campaign.[147] Given-Wilson argued that the choice of the region was 'doubtless the confidence he placed in his father's affinity that persuaded Henry to land in Yorkshire'.[148]

Usk recorded that first to assist him was: 'Robert Waterton, chief forester of his forest of Knaresborough, bringing two hundred foresters with him, and after him came the earls of Westmorland and Northumberland'.[149] The *Kirkstall Abbey Chronicle* related how the castle at Pickering was handed over to Henry, although it was not meant to be, and how Knaresborough castle 'was handed over in the same fashion, though with greater difficulty'.[150] What these difficulties were is not revealed but it showed that the initial response by the region,

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[143] Helen Castor, *The King, the Crown, and the Duchy of Lancaster – Public Authority and Private Power, 1399-1461* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 25.

[144] Simon Walker, *The Lancastrian Affinity 1361-1399* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), p. 31.

[145] Walker, *Lancastrian Affinity*, p. 238. The Lancastrian affinity was also well represented in the Commons in Lincolnshire and Derbyshire.

[146] Castor, *The King, the Crown*, p. 25, fn. 23.

[147] Chris Given-Wilson, *Henry IV* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016), p. 127.

[148] Ibid., p. 126.

[149] *Usk*, pp. 52-3.

[150] *The Kirkstall Abbey Chronicles*, ed. John Taylor, Thoresby Society, XLII (1950-1952), p. 77.

despite these being duchy castles, was less than enthusiastic. However, Walsingham hints at the possible retribution that could be exercised by Richard if he defeated Henry: 'no one dared yet to negotiate with the duke openly, for it was not known what the outcome of such action would be' and that any of the duke's supporters: 'would be very severely dealt with'.[151]

Henry must have felt vulnerable as he realised that the duchy support he had depended on was not immediately forthcoming. It is perhaps at this point that he astutely decided that in order to rally support he needed to adopt a different approach, in his case the swearing of an oath. There has been a certain amount of debate concerning Henry's swearing of an oath declaring that he would not take the throne when he alighted at Ravenspur in July 1399.[152] However, the event raises the subject of how he regarded Yorkshire as an *audience*. This suggested that the oath was a pivotal piece of *integration* propaganda employed by Henry on a Yorkshire *audience*.

Hicks quoted from the *Brief Treatise* that the Percies were planning on arresting Henry but were swayed by his oath. In this oath he declared, according to the *Dieulacres Chronicle*: 'that he would never try to seize the crown, and then said that if anyone might be found who was more worthy of the crown than he was, he would willingly stand down for him'.[153] Those who heard this oath, including the Percies, obviously took him at his word and let him continue on his journey. Enigmatically, Bolingbroke stated that he was not interested in the crown but could be – was he trying to hint at his real motivation? Was this oath just propaganda to *integrate* the population into supporting his attempt to reclaim the duchy of Lancaster as the true inheritor? He apparently swore this oath at several other places in Yorkshire, including Beverley and Doncaster. If they were sincere in origin then they had the same impact on the *audience* in raising sympathy and creating the impression that he was the victim. Hicks highlighted the fact that many of the sources that recounted the event were written in Latin.[154] Henry required the support mainly of the nobles but if he was intent on seizing the throne he would also have needed to court popular opinion as well. Henry assessed the situation and produced the necessary rhetoric to assuage the apparent antipathy, if not hostility, to his return from a Northern *audience*. It is debatable whether the oath was reactive rather than pre-planned

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[151] *St. Albans*, II, p. 141.
[152] Michael Hicks, 'The Yorkshire Perjuries of Henry Bolingbroke in 1399 Revisited', *NH*, XLVI (2009), 31-41. Hicks provided a summary of the various arguments and sources relating to this event.
[153] Hicks, 'Yorkshire Perjuries', p. 34.
[154] Hicks, 'Yorkshire Perjuries', pp. 40-41.

but considering the evidence from above it is extremely likely that Henry had various propaganda plans in mind which may have included the oath.[155]

However, with no definitive contemporaneous evidence there is the problem that the story is related after 1403 so may well have been Percy propaganda constructed to blacken Henry's reputation. What may be drawn from the event is that the Yorkshire *audience's* approval of his motives was crucial to ensuring his passage through the realm, without a successful reception in Yorkshire Henry may not have become king. Jewell regarded the involvement of the North in Henry IV's successful accession as leading to 'a century of more marked north-south awareness'.[156]

Henry IV, although initially heralded as a saviour from the alleged tyranny of Richard II soon faced opposition to his own rule in the form of a series of rebellions whose origins were Northern. Simon Walker regarded the uprisings although with shared grievances, as separate events that were not all directed by the Percies.[157]

The most notable of these uprisings was the one led by Archbishop Scrope, Lord Mowbray and Sir William Plumpton in 1405. The traditional view has held that Northumberland was behind them all, however Walker suggested that the Yorkshire rebels, in particular those of the city of York, had different grievances to those of Northumberland.[158] Northumberland's rationale was essentially a dynastic one of vested interests. The other rebels, including Scrope, were complaining about the poor governance of the country including the ever increasing tax burden:

> The archbisshoppe commynde of this with wise men of counsell, and afterwarde he made a sermon in þe churche off York and exhorted and stured the peple to be assistente & helpynge off the correccion and amendmente of the myscheues & mysgouernaunce off the realme.[159]

There has been much debate about the authorship of Scrope's manifesto as discussed by Douglas Biggs.[160] Scrope not only preached in York but ensured that his complaint was

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[155] Above, pp. 96-105.

[156] Jewell, *North South*, p. 44.

[157] Simon Walker, 'The Yorkshire Risings of 1405: Texts and Contexts', in Dodd and Biggs (eds), *Henry IV*, pp. 161-184.

[158] Walker, 'Yorkshire Risings', p. 165.

[159] *English Chronicle*, p. 36.

[160] Douglas Biggs, 'Archbishop Scrope's *Manifesto* of 1405: "Naive Nonsense" or Reflections of Political Reality?' *JMH*, 33 (2007), 358-371.

communicated to a larger *audience*: 'these articules & mony other þe archebisshoppe made to be writon yn Englessh, and were sette on þe yates of Yorke, and sende to curatez off the tounes abovte forto be preched openly'.[161]

Significantly Walsingham translated the manifesto from English into Latin and it is interesting to note that the chronicler makes the specific point of recording the fact that these articles were published in English suggesting that this was unusual whilst hinting that Scrope was addressing the masses with the intention to provoke a response or *agitating* them to support him.[162] Walsingham also cited the personality of Scrope as being instrumental in *agitating* people: 'of particular importance also in stirring the people was the well-known godliness of the archbishop…and the gentleness and purity of his character'.[163] This manifesto at once identified Scrope as a *producer* and *agitator* whilst the city of York may be defined as both *receiver* and *audience* but of course the ultimate *audience* was really Henry IV and his court. *Giles' Chronicle*, which itself can be seen as a piece of propaganda produced by a pro-Scrope source in the North, described Henry's oppression as unbearable *importabiles extortiones* and recorded how Henry heard of the complaints of the citizens of York through the *agitation* of the archbishop: 'murmuratio, ventilate in populo per praefatum archiepiscopum'.[164]

The *English Chronicle* suggested that it was Lord Mowbray's inheritance grievances that impelled Scrope to take action: 'his heire the Lorde Moubrey, compleyned vnto the Archebisshoppe of Yorke and seide that his auncestreez were euer wonte off right to be marshalles of Engelonde'.[165] However, the manifesto listed the grievances perceived by the rebels against Henry IV and his government rather than matters of inheritance. These included the excessive taxation of both the lay and clerical population; the placement of Henry IV's friends in important positions who appeared to profit whilst failing to do their job and the changes in the election process for knights of the shire. Mark Ormrod regarded the hesitancy of the judges to ascribe the plan for the deposition of Henry IV to the authorship of Scrope, and thus make his actions treasonable, as indicative that the idea was inserted deliberately to

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[161] *English Chronicle*, p. 36.
[162] *St. Albans*, II, p. 443.
[163] Ibid., p. 441-443.
[164] *Incerti Scriptoris Chronicon Angliae de Regnis Trium Regum Lancastrensium: Henrici IV, Henrici V, et Henrici VI*, ed. J. A. Giles (London: D. Nutt, 1848), p. 44. This northern chronicle with links to the Scrope family, described the events of 1405 and the aftermath on Henry IV's reign, pp. 43-63. See also M. Clarke and V. Galbraith, 'The Deposition of Richard II', *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* (1930), 125-81.
[165] *English Chronicle*, p. 35

associate Scrope with Percy.[166] Ormrod saw Scrope's complaints as essentially a loyal criticism aimed at restoring the peace within the country to the benefit of all. This was not the first time that Scrope had expressed his discomfort with the governance of the realm. The year before in 1404 he supported the archbishop of Canterbury in his complaints against the knights who he felt were becoming rich at the expense of both the king and country.[167] Scrope may well have been sympathetic to the charges and experienced at first hand the effects of the burden of taxation on his own parishioners in York. Walker cited the York articles as being specific in listing the grievances of all those potentially who could be drawn into the debate, that was, the clergy, nobility and commons.[168] This identified the social make-up of the polity within the York area. The manifesto showed that the Northerners were able to express and communicate complaint, that is, they were politically aware of the interdependent relationship between king and the commons.

In terms of propaganda the manifesto merits serious consideration for a number of reasons. First, it was posted up in public places and was therefore meant to be read by the public and second, and perhaps most importantly, it was written in English. Peter McNiven dismissed Scrope's potential *audience* as not particularly politically astute which may explain why it was written in English.[169] However, the use of English suggested that these bills were meant for a larger audience than the elite and in fact the use of the vernacular was not uncommon in York itself and Scrope would have been conscious of this. There was also the possibility that in fact the bills were written by clerical adherents of Scrope, possibly without his direct involvement.[170] In a city like York the *audience* would have been diverse, in class, education and occupation. The composition of the rebels revealed the majority being clerics or townsmen.[171] Familial support from Richmondshire was minimal revealing that it was very much a York complaint specific to Scrope's role as Archbishop and may be seen in the context of loyal complaint. In terms of propaganda for his cause Scrope's manifesto did successfully *agitate* several thousand followers to his cause and from the lists of pardons for the period June-July 1405 it was apparent that the rebels came from not only the city of York but as far

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[166] W. Mark Ormrod, 'An Archbishop in Revolt: Richard Scrope and the Yorkshire Rising of 1405', in P. J. P. Goldberg (ed.), *Richard Scrope: Archbishop, Rebel, Martyr* (Donington: Shaun Tyas, 2007), pp. 28-44 (p. 32).
[167] *St. Albans*, II, p. 423.
[168] Walker, 'Yorkshire Risings', p. 173.
[169] Peter McNiven, 'The Betrayal of Archbishop Scrope', *BJRL*, 54 (1971), 173-213 (p. 185).
[170] Ormrod, 'An Archbishop in Revolt', pp. 35-36.
[171] Walker, 'Yorkshire Risings', pp. 175-77.

as Malton in the North Riding. There were also pardons for rebels from Warkworth, Newcastle, Berwick and Darlington in the north east, although the latter towns were most probably connected to the earlier Percy uprising rather than Scrope's.[172]

This rebellion was without doubt Northern based and in this case the North was the *producer* of the propaganda against Henry IV. The *audience* was intended to be mostly the citizens of York at one level, and possibly Percy supporters at another. Was Scrope used as a vehicle of respectability to gain the support of the influential York merchants to further legitimize what could be regarded as a personal crusade by Percy? The evidence suggested that the uprising was very much grounded in the concerns of the York clergy together with the mercantile community of the city. Any Percy connection was probably peripheral and Scrope's uprising was tainted by geographical proximity and timing rather than any genuine common complaint. The rebellion was Northern in origin, centred on the city of York, but the malign influence of the Percies deflected the attention away from it being independent from magnate influence.

There was no straightforward answer to the failure of the rebellion. It was quite well organised and successful in that Scrope managed to raise a considerable force. It could be said that timing was unfortunate with the fact that the Percies had been stirring up pro-Richard feeling for a number of years in the region and that Henry IV's questionable claim to the throne had led him to the path of action rather than negotiation. Scrope was not looking for a battle rather he wanted to engage in legitimate discourse for the betterment of the country but unfortunately Henry IV was not of the same view.

The region had been the arena for two of the most significant events in Henry's reign. First, allowing his passage southwards and second, the controversial execution of Scrope which demonstrated his political will. At both times the North was an *audience* of political importance. The loss of their supremacy in the region meant that the Percy family receded temporarily into the background of Northern politics having been replaced by the Lancastrian Neville-Beaufort family who Henry entrusted to keep the peace in the region and thus provided stability for the rest of his reign.[173] Henry's arrival at Ravenspur resulted in the North being an *audience* for his *integration* propaganda which was central to his return and subsequent seizing the throne. However, after a series of uprisings in the region in 1405 he was no longer courting

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[172] *CPR, 1405-1408*, pp. 70-72, 75-79.
[173] Arvanigian, 'Henry V', pp. 78-79.

the favour of a Northern *audience*, rather expressing his displeasure through the *visual* propaganda of Scrope's execution.[174] These events demonstrated how through the reception and production of propaganda the North was involved in the major political events at the start of the Lancastrian era.

Case Study 2: Edward IV and his relationship with the North.

This case study will develop the themes explored above but in the context of dynastic change Yorkist and the impact on the region. The North was of strategic importance to another usurper, Edward IV. Edward was regarded in the South as a saviour as attested by the author of the Rose of Rouen:

> All the lordes of the northe thei wrought by oon assent
> Ffor to stroy the sowthe cuntre thei did all hur entent
> Had not the rose of Rone be, al englond had be shent.[175]

However, Ross warned of 'a distorted picture of England which was primarily Yorkist in the south and east and royalist in the north and west' which was the creation of pro-Yorkist chroniclers.[176] The Northern situation was as expected far more complicated than the chroniclers portrayed and dominated by the local rivalry of the Percy and Neville families, the former Lancastrian and latter Yorkist in sympathy.[177] Thus within the region political allegiances were divided and divisive and although Edward had Neville support in the region, the Lancastrians were the source of much aggravation for the first part of his reign.

In 1461 on the occasion of Edward's first visit to York after Towton he removed his father's head and those of other Yorkists from Micklegate Bar and replaced them with those of Lancastrians.[178] This was a very clear example of *visual* propaganda by Edward, using York as an *audience* but with the knowledge that his message would reach the rest of the region. However, this *visual* propaganda apparently had a limited effect at *integration*, if any at all,

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[174] See above for a fuller description of the *visual* propaganda used by Henry after the rebellion, pp. 103-4.

[175] 'The Battle of Towton', in *Historical Poems of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries*, ed. Rossell Hope Robbins (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959), p. 216.

[176] Ross, *Edward IV*, p. 23.

[177] The Lancastrians held on to a series of castles in Northumberland that were a source of aggravation to Edward who was trying to quell northern unrest. Pollard, *Wars of the Roses*, p. 27.

[178] C. B. Knight, *A History of the City of York* (York: Herald Printing Works, 1944), p. 298.

judging by a letter written in August 1461 to the Duke of Milan:

> The Earl of Warwick has gone towards Yorkshire, a province opposed to that King, and very friendly to King Henry. I believe it will submit to King Edward ... seeing at their backs the Earl of Warwick, who does them great mischief, and but for whom those people would have joined King Henry and taken the field again; but Warwick has prevented this.[179]

This letter confirmed Edward's lack of support in the region but emphasised the loyalty of the region to Warwick. Lancastrian defeat at the Battle of Towton saw the demise of many Northern magnates and as a result many of the forfeitures were granted to the Nevilles. The earl of Warwick in particular benefitted, gaining Percy and Clifford land in Cumberland and Craven whilst his brother became the earl of Northumberland. This led to a change in the political landscape of the North with a greater Yorkist and Neville influence.

Not only did the Neville family gain land and property but also positions of power. In January 1466 George Neville was enthroned at York Minster and to celebrate the occasion a feast took place:

> The usual feast took place ... and was made the occasion for impressing the king with the power and influence of the Nevilles and their connections. This, the most magnificent installation banquet ever held ... about 2,000 persons were present.[180]

The *audience* here was the city of York and one may speculate that it was an opportunity to show the extent of Neville power and wealth to their rivals, the Percies. The Neville connection to Edward IV would have consolidated the Yorkist monarchy not only to this Northern *audience* but also to the whole country however as relations soured between Edward and Warwick this relationship was to impact dramatically on the realm and the North.

The late 1460's were a particularly turbulent time for Edward that resulted in his temporary loss of the throne and as Christine Carpenter argued 'it was the north that brought Edward down'.[181] There was a series of uprisings in Yorkshire that began in April 1469 with the first Robin of Redesdale's rebellion which was followed with another in the summer. The rebels, led by Sir John Conyers, issued a series of complaints regarding Edward's rule which

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[179] *Calendar of State Papers Venetian*, vol. 1, 1202-1509, ed. Rawdon Brown (London: Green Longman, Roberts and Green, 1864), pp. 110-111.

[180] George Benson, *Later Medieval York: The City and County of the City of York from 1100 to 1603: A Continuation of "York from its Origin to the End of the Eleventh Century"* (York: Coultas & Volans, printers, 1919), p. 88.

[181] Carpenter, *Wars*, p. 173.

have been regarded as having the undeniable hand of Warwick attached to them.[182] In July 1469 Edward IV complained to the mayor of Coventry about the Northern rioters 'makyng proclamacions contrary to ther legens, & our pece'.[183] Yorkshire, with the aid of Warwick, were *producing* propaganda to agitate the polity against Edward and draw him northwards which gave Warwick and Clarence the opportunity to land in the south. The battle of Edgecote in July saw Edward captured by Warwick and taken north to the Neville stronghold of Middleham castle. After a series of nationwide uprisings Edward was released in early 1470 as Warwick appeared to be unable to deal with the situation which as Carpenter observed revealed how Warwick's complaints against Edward had failed to engage 'in the public consciousness'.[184] The *Crowland Chronicle* confirms this conclusion: 'while, the king was still manifestly a prisoner people were not ready to obey such commands, not until he had appeared in person at York in full possession of his freedom'.[185]

There then followed the Lincolnshire rebellion which culminated in Edward's victory at Lose-cote Field in March which revealed the involvement of Warwick and Clarence yet again. However, the final sequence in these uprisings was Fitzhugh's rebellion in Yorkshire which had a disastrous outcome for Edward. As he headed North to deal with the rebels Montagu and his troops betrayed Edward and as his troops dispersed in fear, he fled to Burgundy.

In the 'official' *Chronicle of the Rebellion in Lincolnshire* the involvement of Richmondshire was explicitly stated: 'the commocion in meoving of people in Richemond shire by the stirring of Scrope and othere'.[186] This confirms Pollard's statement that 'the people of Richmondshire had an importance in national politics put of all proportion to their wealth and location' which was certainly true for the events of 1469-70.[187] Thus it was these Yorkshire risings that were culpable for ending Edward's first reign.

The *Historie of the Arrivall of King Edward IV* chronicled his return from exile in 1471 and although not written for a Northern audience it illustrated Edward's reception in the region.

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[182] For the original text see *John Vale's Book*, pp. 212-215.
[183] *Coventry Leet Book*, p. 341. Edward was seeking support from Coventry in the form of 100 archers to quell the rebellion of Robin of Redesdale.
[184] Carpenter, *Wars*, p. 175.
[185] *Crowland*, p. 117.
[186] 'Chronicle of the Rebellion in Lincolnshire,1470', ed. J. Gough Nichols, *Camden Miscellany*, CS, old series, 39 (1847), p. 12.
[187] Pollard, 'Richmondshire Community', p. 37.

Edward's arrival was reminiscent of Henry Bolingbroke's in 1399 and once again the North proved a decisive *audience* in his readeption. Edward too, proclaimed that he was only interested in regaining his father's inheritance: 'but all they suffred hym to pas forthe by the contrye; eythar, for that he and all his felowshipe pretendyd by any manar langage none othar qwarell but for the right that was his fathars, the Duke of Yorke'.[188] However, once he reached the city of York he found that not everyone was well disposed to receive him:

> Thomas Coniers, Recordar of the citie, whiche had not bene afore that named trwe to the Kyngs partie. He tolde hym that it was not good for hym to come to the citie, for eyther he shuld not be suffred to enter, or els, in caas he enteryd, he was lost, and undone, and all his.[189]

On his closer approach he did receive a warmer welcome based on the belief that he was not returning to claim the throne: 'owt of the citie, Robart Clifford and Richard Burghe, whiche gave hym and his felowshipe bettar comforte, affirmyng, that in the qwarell aforesayde of his father the Duke of Yorke, he shuld be receyvyd and sufferyd to passe'.[190] Once inside the city Edward again used his propagandist skills to persuade the inhabitants and 'shewed them th'entent and purpos of his comming, in suche forme, and with such maner langage, that the people contentyd them therwithe, and so receyvyd hym'.[191] Edward had 'played' the York *audience* astutely and convincingly.

Although there was apparently little regional support for Edward he was still allowed to pass through the city. It was not his propaganda alone that secured his safe passage but the support of the earl of Northumberland and his affinity: 'for grete partye of [the] noble men and comons in thos parties were towards th'Erle of Northumbarland, and would not stire with any lorde or noble man other than with the sayde Earle'.[192] This is a crucial example of where Edward's propaganda was more influential than his personality as it was apparent that the North was more disposed to support Henry.

If Edward had not convinced the Northern *audience* of his intentions (dishonest as they were), through the use of persuasive rhetoric, he would not have been able to travel south. The

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[188] *Historie*, pp. 1-40 (p. 4).
[189] Ibid., p. 5.
[190] Ibid., p. 5.
[191] Ibid., p. 5.
[192] Ibid., p. 6.

role of the earl of Northumberland was also pivotal, by doing nothing, his supporters in this huge region tacitly took this to mean acceptance of Edward's return:

> for his sittynge still caused the citie of Yorke to do as they dyd, and no werse, and every man in all thos northe partes to sit still also, and suffre the Kynge to passe as he dyd, nat with standynge many were right evill disposed of them selfe agaynes the Kynge. [193]

As has been noted Edward IV was not particularly popular in the region and this may be reflected in the devotion exhibited at York Minster before an image of Henry VI.[194] The active participation of the citizens in the cult of Henry VI revealed that the windows and other visual decoration discussed had had a positive impact upon the memory of the local population, who perhaps regarded the Lancastrian dynasty as the true rulers of the realm. It would appear that as an *audience* the inhabitants of York had been successfully integrated by Lancastrian visual propaganda despite the fate of Archbishop Scrope at the hands of a Lancastrian king.

The North, and Yorkshire in particular, played a pivotal role in Edward's reign by causing his flight in 1470 and allowing his return in 1471. Edward's uneasy relationship with the region was mitigated by his brother Richard's development of a power-base that ensured Yorkist control.

The region had been both a *producer* and an *audience* for propaganda albeit with the considerable magnate influence of the Nevilles and Percies particularly during the Wars of the Roses but with the city of York retaining its mercantile and ecclesiastical interests which informed their propaganda. Propaganda played an integral part in Northern politics, at a regional and national level, due to the magnate power-bases that existed in the region and its geographical position.

<u>Conclusion.</u>

It has been possible to show that the North was not isolated and received regular news concerning national affairs. On the contrary, despite its distance from London, the North was well placed through its powerful magnates, communications network and importance of York to fulfil many of Ellul's criteria for propaganda to thrive. There were frequent opportunities for communication via letter or personal contact as evidence from both the *York House Books*

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[193] Ibid., p. 7.
[194] Brown, *'Our Magnificent Fabrick'*, p. 235.

and Plumpton letters has shown. The Plumpton letters demonstrated that the Northern gentry were relatively prosperous and no different to their southern counterparts. They shared the same concerns about patronage, land and marriage and importantly these interests allowed them to gain information, sometimes propaganda, from various sources which then could influence the course of politics in the region. The *York House Books* presented an alternative view of mercantile and urban life. The interests of the merchants were naturally concerned with trade and connections to the continent. Together these sources establish an image of a thriving and politically active region suited to both the reception and production of propaganda.

What has become apparent is that despite the alleged uncultured image of the North it had a pivotal role in the politics of late medieval England. This is apparent from the subsequent efforts that the Tudors took to regain control of the region. From the discussion above there is scant evidence to support the suggestion that the North was politically ill-informed during this period.

As the *subject* of propaganda, the North provoked some very hostile comments, particularly during the late 1450's due to the Lancastrian 'hordes' under the auspices of Margaret of Anjou. Some of their reputation was indeed justified but equally it was exploited and exaggerated for propaganda by the southern Yorkists and chroniclers. With few Northern sources to redress the balance the impression of a lawless region has survived the centuries, exacerbated by the prominence of the Neville/ Percy conflict. It would also be fair to say that it was not the only region that received contemporary opprobrium from the chroniclers, as the Welsh and Kentishmen were also portrayed as somewhat rebellious. The Tudor propaganda machine also sought to entrench any stereotyping of the North for their own political gain, particularly the wickedness of Richard III, which in turn was mythologised through the centuries as an accurate portrayal of the area and its inhabitants.

As a *producer* of propaganda, the North was active, often a more local level, as seen in York in 1380, rather than at a national level. However, this local *agitation* often had national implications which drew in the king and government.

The case studies demonstrated that Henry IV and Edward IV both had to influence a Northern *audience* to fulfil their regal ambitions. They both undoubtedly used the area for their propaganda and had they failed to convince their Northern *audience* then the course of fifteenth-century English history would have been very different. The region was strategically

important both politically and geographically. The established quarrels between the Percies and Nevilles filtered down through their affinities and into general society so the population of the region was aware of the importance of allegiances, patronage, speaking up about injustices – in short, they were politicised. Events in York revealed the independence of the citizens from the machinations of the local magnates, when it suited, and showed the relationship between commercial necessity and political pragmatism.

In summary the North was politically significant throughout the late medieval period, for the personnel it provided and as a geographical location for major political events. It *produced* propaganda and was a crucial *audience* for the propaganda of key players at both a local and national level. The polity was diverse with major magnates as well as a strong mercantile element, all with their own interests, and combined with an established communications network ensured that the region was well informed and able to participate in the major political events of the period. The North fulfilled the criteria that Ellul outlined and that have formed the basis of this thesis to demonstrate the breadth and diversity of political communication within a region in late medieval England.

Conclusion.

This thesis has examined over a century of diverse and complex material in order to gain an impression of the nature and extent of propaganda in late medieval England. It has encompassed the historiography of both political and art history with the intention of broadening the discussion on propaganda as a means of political communication. The study sought to challenge the established view that it was only with the Tudors that *visual* propaganda became so important. The adoption of its methodology enabled a new way of looking at political communication that removed the negative associations of 'propaganda', as associated with distortion and manipulation. The evidence showed that there was an established production of, and reception of, propaganda across England, including areas distant from the political 'centre', in particular, the North. This provided evidence to observe how the medieval polity operated at both a national and local level. The adopted methodology showed that propaganda, or political communication, played a significant role in the promotion of royal personality and policy. However, the evidence for the existence of and effectiveness of opposition propaganda revealed that the ability to communicate on a large scale was not confined to the court or nobility. The study has shown examples of propaganda that might be proactive, well planned and executed, and not just reactive. Further, approaching the sources from the last years of the fourteenth century has demonstrated that propaganda as a means of political communication was already well developed before the Wars of the Roses: this manifestation of political life was not a product of that sequence of political crises but as an aspect of the world from which they grew.

Late medieval England was a period in which the nation experienced great changes, both internally and externally. The death of Edward III heralded an age of dynastic instability, most particularly by the accession of his infant grandson Richard. The resultant minority, failure to produce an heir and subsequent deposition led to decades of power struggles between various factions which eventually drew the country into the civil war known as the Wars of the Roses. Externally, the Hundred Years War left the country war weary and almost bankrupt. It was a time of moments of immense upheaval amongst periods of normal daily life.

The main obstacle in dealing with the subject of political propaganda in the late medieval period is how to define it within a set of parameters that were relevant to the age. The

debate between publicity and propaganda has missed the essential point that they are both about communicating with an audience, and that any method used indicates that there is a need for a two-way conversation between the crown and the rest of the population: it is here that this thesis establishes a clearly alternative line of argument from that attempted by Colin Richmond some years ago.[1] The promotion of kingship should not be treated as a separate issue: it was integral to medieval politics and it is evident, in the public appearances of a king and the reactions they elicited, that the polity did not differentiate between publicity and propaganda.

The use of the categories of *agitation* and *integration* propaganda as outlined by Ellul, provides a framework, by which it is possible to ascertain the motives behind the use of various methods of communication.[2] Previous historiography on the role of political communication in the period has tended not to use a explicit methodological and framework, and there is a definite benefit to analysing the evidence against one. The need to *agitate* the populace, by the king, was usually for war support whilst *agitation* by the nobility was linked to securing their own interests and with the case of the other groups it was usually a complaint about the governance of the kingdom. *Integration* propaganda meanwhile provides a more subtle form of persuasion, often with longer term objectives. The use of portraits and heraldic arms in public spaces created opportunities for dynastic legitimisation. The production of genealogies provides a justification for usurpers that is meant to remove opposition and provide historic 'evidence' for accepting, or *integrating*, the new king.

Socially there was an increase in the level of education and literacy, especially amongst the gentry and mercantile community. Historiography has concentrated on the effect that the increase in literacy had on political communication especially with the introduction of the printing press. This focus meant that 'visual' literacy, which was already established within the public psyche, was overlooked until the Tudors. There is no disputing the rise in literacy but it was still restricted to a relatively small proportion of the polity, therefore, when a large audience needed to be reached the visual genre was more effective.

The major factor in enabling propaganda to succeed is a communications system that reaches the target audience. Communication networks were efficient, both at home and abroad. These factors all combined to create a more informed populace who were able to express their

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[1] See above, Richmond, pp. 11, 23-24.
[2] See above, Ellul, p. 9.

complaint, whether through poetry, demonstrations or bills, especially with regard to good governance or the behaviour of the king's advisors. These changes led to the need to counter any negative communication and thus the more explicit use of propaganda, particularly visual, became more prevalent, used by both the establishment and dissenters alike to either *integrate* or *agitate* respectively. The frequency of letters that appear in the correspondence of the Plumpton and Paston families which reveal the concerns, familial, political and economic that troubled the gentry of the time. They also revealed the extent of communication between England and the continent, in particular Calais. The road network was well established as seen from the evidence of the use of messengers by the cities of York and Coventry and other references to the movement of lawyers, merchants, government officials and pilgrims around the country recorded in various sources.

The methods available to any potential propagandist were many and varied. The king and government had many means of official methods of communication particularly proclamations, that were used to inform and control the population. Proclamations were a rather more complex method of communication as there was the possibility that each sheriff could affect the outcome through the translation and reading of the preamble. Edward IV's extensive use of them combined with his introduction of using English meant that their contents were under control and there was less chance of misinterpretation, an important factor in times of unrest or in the case of an usurper. Other written sources used by dissenters included newsletters, bills and poetry. The reaction to these sources reveals that they were often effective, for example the letters distributed during the Peasants' Revolt. The pulpit was used for the use of government rhetoric but equally was used to express complaint by the clergy, as in the case of archbishop Scrope.

This thesis has placed an emphasis on the *visual* genre as a means of political communication. This is an area that had been studied by art historians but only received a cursory examination by political historians. The advantages of visual media was two-fold, it was an effective mechanism for both *agitation* and *integration* propaganda. The heraldic tradition was ubiquitous as a visual code that affected the style of the majority of 'art' in this period from dress to architecture. Its success as a means of communication resulted in legislation to control its abuse, particularly with regard to affinities. The production of large quantities of badges for distribution confirms their efficiency in influencing a large audience. The decoration on effigies sought to establish a dynastic presence or connection to a dynasty

within the historical space of a church. The embedding of a visual memory was a faster method of *integration* than other, literary, sources.

The 'physical' section of *visual* propaganda revealed the human body, either dead or alive, to be an important resource, particularly in terms of *integration*. Executions provided the opportunity to communicate with a large audience, whether in London or the provinces, whilst the despatch of quarters was used as vehicle of political communication to other areas of the country. The destination of the quarters was chosen with a clear political message to quell further dissent in the counties. The use of executions to make a point was not restricted to the king as was seen by the rebel beheadings in 1381. Generally, it appeared that state executions were intended to control or *integrate,* they were an expression of the king's will. When used by rebels they were blatant displays of *agitation* propaganda meant to boost the morale of their supporters. Joel Burden's work on the burial of Richard II highlighted the role of ritual and communal memory and how visual events were an integral part of medieval communication.[3]

Rumour, a constant threat to the stability of a dynasty, not only resulted in the use of proclamations as propaganda as discussed by Ross but was also dealt with visually. The announcement of the death of a prominent figure was hard to prove, especially when that person was an usurped monarch, such as Richard II. Henry IV had to deal with constant rumours of Richard's survival and felt that his only recourse to dispel the story was to exhibit Richard's body publicly. Although only partially successful in convincing everyone of Richard's death, it is the very act of the displaying that signifies the importance of visual display as a recognised method of mass communication and the importance of witnessing such events by the polity.

The late medieval population enjoyed and responded to the many occasions of visual spectacle at regular times of year. Many of these events were aimed at *integration*, showing who was in charge through their magnificence, much in the same way that martial displays intimidated opponents with their size and appearance. Richard II's reconciliation with the city of London whilst exerting his authority and kingship was expressed visually in the form of a procession. This act of *integration* involved the whole community in a visual and participatory way. Humiliation is another area that has not been extensively reviewed. It was an effective visual form of propaganda, usually with the intention to *integrate*. The display of a king dressed inappropriately was a risky strategy – it could show that they were no longer fit to rule or it

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[3] See above, Burden, p. 101, n. 204.

could arouse sympathy for them whilst incurring antipathy towards the other party. The display of Richard II by Bolingbroke was in the main successful as Richard's position as king was already severely undermined.

All of these examples depended upon the visual literacy and knowledge of the audience for them to work as propaganda and for the most part they were understood and the reaction was what was hoped for. These events depended on the engagement of the public and sought their political support – it was a public conversation that everyone was invited to join in. The reaction of people, whether removing badges after a change of regime, or submitting to the king after multiple executions, confirms that *visual* propaganda was incredibly effective and was used with this knowledge in mind by diverse groups as well as the king. Despite the effect of the increase in literacy it was *visual* propaganda that was able to interact with the whole of society, whether it was to *integrate* or *agitate*. The 'spaces' where *visual* propaganda took place were not restricted but included the majority of the late medieval population. The large public arenas for executions drew in the whole polity whilst the shire courts reached another audience for the reading of proclamations. Sacred sites, such as York Minster, provided space for genealogical *integrational* propaganda whilst the Wilton Diptych was produced for a private audience. The use of livery and badges was to be found in the everyday surroundings of the populace, in other words, 'spaces' were abundant for the display of all genres of *visual* propaganda.

The investigation of personality and propaganda involved concepts of charisma, kingship and policy. In order to assess whether personality or propaganda were the more dominant factor, parameters were employed to investigate the evidence available. First, the extent and nature of uprisings during a reign and secondly, the imposition of taxes combined with the raising of support for foreign war. It appeared that the kings with the apparent weakest personalities that is, Richard II and Henry VI, both struggled with uprisings throughout their reigns. Edward IV, despite losing the throne regained it through a combination of propaganda and having a more charismatic persona than his rival, Henry VI. Edward displayed better qualities of kingship and leadership which reduced the possibility of complaint from the commons. The issues of taxation and war support revealed how important the personality of the king was to the essential needs of the country. Henry V embodied all the qualities required by the country to *agitate* support for his campaign in France whilst imbuing the population with a communal sense of patriotism and pride. The use of propaganda could not compensate

for a lack of personality, however personality had to be combined with good kingship as the polity would complain if they felt that good governance was lacking. Henry IV, Henry V and Edward IV were all in control of the image that they projected – all coming to the throne as young adults and adapting the various methods of propaganda to suit their needs. Both Richard II and Henry VI suffered from not being allowed to assert themselves after long minorities, being dominated by family or powerful magnates whilst Richard III was the author of his own downfall, the image of a murderer was one that could not be erased through personality or propaganda.

The Northern chapter provided evidence that drew together all the elements discussed in the thesis to corroborate Ellul's methodology in a regional case study. The North, although geographically remote from Westminster, was a politically significant region and not just because of the historical Percy/Neville relationship. The composition of the region saw a mix of border defence, urban mercantile interests, ecclesiastical centres, such as York, together with magnate influence. This diversity resulted in a population that was politically dynamic and well integrated in terms of communication networks. Its reputation as lawless derived from its connection to border warfare, a reputation that was continued with Henry VI and Margaret of Anjou's unruly Northern adherents. Richard III's relationship with the North is well documented and his second 'coronation' that was held in York was a visual testament to the importance that he ascribed to the region. York was regarded as the second city to London for many years in terms of economic and political importance. The *York House Books* provided examples of communication between the North and Westminster and the strong mercantile influence of York whilst the Plumpton letters provided evidence of the interests of a gentry family living in the North. Both sources confirmed the existence of a politically aware audience together with evidence of an efficient communications network, which according to Ellul were necessary requisites for propaganda to flourish.

The North as an *audience* for propaganda was shown to be of historical importance. It played a pivotal role in determining the outcome of dynastic change on more than one occasion. First, was the reception of Henry Bolingbroke and although he was not particularly popular in the region, his use of oral and *visual* propaganda for the Yorkshire *audience* was sufficiently persuasive to allow him to pass through the county and ultimately to seize the throne. Secondly, Edward IV was allowed to pass through the region and regain his throne using similar methods to Henry. The North was an instrumental *audience* in the succession and deposition of both the

Lancastrian and Yorkist dynasties. At the end of the period it was the withdrawal of Northern supporters at Bosworth that resulted in the death of Richard III and the end of the Yorkist era.

As a Northern producer of propaganda the most famous example was Scrope's sermon and manifesto of 1405 which successfully *agitated* the local population to support him in his complaint about poor governance. Henry IV was notoriously very swift to put down the uprising and cause uproar with his execution of the prelate. Henry IV used *integration* propaganda through the visual display of Scrope's execution to publicly display to the North the consequences of dissent. This event revealed the political concerns of the population, their role as both an audience for *agitation* and *integration* propaganda and as a producer of propaganda. Both Storey and Pollard were right in emphasising the political significance of the region even though their emphasis was dominated by the magnate influence. The use of the *York House Books* revealed how influential the new wealthy mercantile class was on the politics of the city.

The thesis was built around Ellul's definition of propaganda being used to either *agitate* or *integrate* an audience. The presence of a good communications network was shown to exist and thus the population was involved with various forms of propaganda as the political situation required. The range of media used by a medieval propagandist was varied and included the expected genre of the written source but also the visual genre played a more influential political role than has been previously suggested as the sources have revealed. The longer term aims of *integration* propaganda were well suited to the medium of both architecture and sculpture whilst the immediacy of *agitation* propaganda was seen in the massing of armed retinues and public executions.

The primary works on political propaganda tended to focus on the period of the Wars of the Roses to the exclusion of the possibility of there being a political consciousness that existed before the mid-fifteenth century that inspired the use of propaganda with much of this research based on literary sources.[4] The conditions that existed during the Wars of the Roses have been shown to be present during the reign of Richard II. Likewise, art historians such as Richard Marks have produced work on propaganda that have emphasised the more traditional, monumental works in public spaces, whereas the thesis has widened the discussion to include the physical element of *visual* propaganda. By drawing together evidence from throughout the

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[4] See above, Doig and Allan, p. 11.

late medieval period, including a broad selection of material relating to the *visual* genre, the thesis has produced an image of a political community where *visual* propaganda was present and influential within all social classes. Further, the sources cited have revealed that this was acknowledged by the various kings with their constant recourse to the use of the medium throughout the period.

The main assertions from the thesis are threefold. First, *visual* propaganda played a larger and more influential role than has previously been acknowledged in political communication through *agitation* or *integration*. Monarchs such as Henry IV and Edward IV used the visual genre to great effect, not always successfully but in the full knowledge that it had a powerful impact on the perception of both their kingship and personality. Secondly, that the propaganda of a monarch could not compensate for a weak personality. Finally, the use of the various methods of propaganda described and employed, increasingly through the period, reveal the extent of the audience that, due to an increase in education, a late medieval monarch had to communicate with to ensure domestic harmony and success abroad. The thesis has demonstrated that despite the potential limitations of Ellul's sociological methodology the definitions provided an invaluable and novel approach within a framework with which to identify the various methods of propaganda available and how they were used by the late medieval polity to communicate. From this it has emerged that political discourse took place between the crown and the polity and this 'conversation' took many forms which have previously not been considered in the political historiography of the period.

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