POWER AND IDENTITY IN LANCASTRIAN ENGLAND: 1399-1461

ENGLISH HISTORICAL WRITING IN THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY

A PhD. Dissertation

by

FATİH DURGUN

Departmen of History

İhsan Doğramacı Bilkent University

Ankara

June 2013

To my family and Chris

POWER AND IDENTITY IN LANCASTRIAN ENGLAND 1399-1461: A STUDY OF HISTORICAL WRITING IN THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY

Graduate School of Economics and Social Sciences
of
İhsan Doğramacı Bilkent University

by

FATİH DURGUN

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JUNE 2013

I certify that I have read this thesis and have found that it is fully adequate, in scope and in
quality, as a thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in History.

Asst. Prof. David Thornton
Supervisor

I certify that I have read this thesis and have found that it is fully adequate, in scope and in
quality, as a thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in History.

Asst. Prof. Paul Latimer
Examining Committee Member

I certify that I have read this thesis and have found that it is fully adequate, in scope and in
quality, as a thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in History.

Asst. Prof. Julian Bennett
Examining Committee Member

I certify that I have read this thesis and have found that it is fully adequate, in scope and in
quality, as a thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in History.

Asst. Prof. Oktay Özel
Examining Committee Member

I certify that I have read this thesis and have found that it is fully adequate, in scope and in
quality, as a thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in History.

Prof. Burçin Erol
Examining Committee Member

Approval of the Graduate School of Economics and Social Sciences
---
Prof. Erdal Erel
Director

ABSTRACT

POWER AND IDENTITY IN LANCASTRIAN ENGLAND 1399-1461:

A STUDY OF HISTORICAL WRITING IN THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY

Durgun, Fatih

Ph.D., Department of History

Supervisor: Asst. Prof. David Thornton

June, 2013

The Lancastrian period, which began with the usurpation of Henry IV in 1399 and ended with the deposition of his grandson Henry VI in 1461, was one of the most significant periods in English history. This period witnessed a series of formative developments and events such as attempts by the Lancastrian dynasty to legitimise its position on the throne, the conflicts between central government and regional powers, the Hundred Years War, the Lollard heresy and the Wars of the Roses. Despite the formative importance of the period, Lancastrian history writing has been largely neglected and ignored for a number of reasons. Furthermore, the chronicles of the period have been considered as products of Lancastrian propaganda. Therefore, the main subject and intention of this thesis will be to reconsider historical writing produced in Lancastrian England in the light of current approaches in historiographical studies.

As a whole, the analysis of the evidence in the chronicles will be made by reading them in the historical context in which they were written. In this sense, this study offers a re-contextualisaton of the historical writing produced during the Lancastrian period. Moreover, this thesis will contribute to a better understanding of the general characteristics of historical writing of the period by attempting to rescue it from near oblivion. Thus, this thesis, will hopefully help to fill a great gap in the field of the historiography of Lancastrian rule, in particular, and in the discussion of late medieval historical writing in general.

Keywords: Lancastrian England, Historiography, Chronicles, Henry IV, Henry V, Henry VI, Propaganda

ÖZET

LANCASTER DÖNEMİ İNGİLTERE'SİNDE GÜÇ VE KİMLİK: 1399-1461

15.YÜZYIL TARİH YAZICILIĞI ÜZERİNE BİR ÇALIŞMA

Durgun, Fatih

Doktora, Tarih Bölümü

Tez Yöneticisi: Yrd. Doç. Dr. David Thornton

HAZİRAN, 2013

4.Henry'nin 1399 yılında tahtı ele geçirmesiyle başlayıp, torunu 6. Henry'nin 1461 yılında tahttan indirilmesiyle sona eren Lancaster dönemi İngiliz tarihinin en önemli dönemlerinden biriydi. Bu dönem, Lancaster hanedanın iktidardaki pozisyonunu meşrulaştırma çabaları, merkezi hükümetle yerel güçler arasındaki mücadeleler, Yüzyıl Savaşları, Lollard sapkınlık hareketi ve Güller Savaşı gibi bir dizi biçimlendirici gelişmeler ve olaylara tanıklık etmiştir. Dönemin biçimlendirici önemine karşın, Lancaster dönemi tarih yazıcılığı bazı nedenlerden dolayı ihmal ve göz ardı edilmiştir. Üstelik, dönemin kronikleri Lancaster propaganda ürünü olarak düşünülmüşlerdir. Bu nedenle, bu tezin ana konusu ve amacı Lancaster dönemi İngiltere'sinde ortaya konmuş olan tarih yazımı örneklerini tarih yazıcılığındaki çağdaş gelişmelerin ışığında yeniden irdelemek olacaktır. Bir bütün olarak, kroniklerdeki veriler ve bilgilerin analizi, yazıldıkları dönemin tarihsel bağlamı içinde okunarak yapılacaktır.

Bu bağlamda, bu çalışma Lancaster döneminde ortaya konan tarihi eserlerin yeniden bağlamsallaştırmasını önermektedir. Ayrıca, bu tez, dönemin tarih eserlerinin genel özelliklerinin daha iyi anlaşılmasına, bu eserleri unutulmaktan kurtarmaya çalışarak, katkı sağlayacaktır. Böylece, bu tez, özelde, Lancaster dönemi tarih yazıcılığı genelde ise geç Orta çağ tarih yazıcılığı alanlarında büyük bir boşluğun doldurulmasına yardımcı olmayı hedeflemektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Lancaster İngiltere'si, Tarih Yazımı, Kronikler, 4.Henry, 5. Henry, 6. Henry, Propaganda.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT iii
ÖZET v
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS vii
TABLE OF CONTENTS ix
CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION 1

I.1 Historical Background 2

I.2 Modern Scholarly Perception of Fifteenth - Century England 8

I.3 Modern Scholarly Literature on the Historiography of the Lancastrian Period and Propaganda 12

1.4 Chronicles and Historians of the Lancastrian Period 15

1.5 Late Medieval English Historical Writing 25

1.6 Main Themes of the Thesis 29

CHAPTER II: HISTORIOGRAPHY, LEGITIMACY AND SUCCESSION PROBLEM 34

II.1 Introduction 34

II.2 The Importance of the Lancastrian Claim by Descent 40

II.3 Walsingham's Changing Attitude to the Succession Problem 43

II.4 The Mortimer Claim and the "Crouchback Legend" in the *Eulogium* and Usk's Chronicle 52

II.5 Bolingbroke, Succession Problem and the Chronicles 61

II.6 Resurgence of an Old Problem 63

II.7 The Succession Problem in the Chronicles of Later Lancastrian Period 66

CHAPTER III: RECONSIDERING THE FABRICATION OF THE COMMON CONSENT 71

III.1 Introduction 71

III.2 Fabrication of Consent and Propaganda 72

III.3 *Brut*, *London Chronicles*, the *Eulogium* and Consent 75

III.4 Walsingham's Account of Common Consent: A Lancastrian Narrative? 87

III.5 What Was the Aim of Bolingbroke? 89

CHAPTER IV: THE THEME OF "COMMON GOOD" AND CRITICISM OF LANCASTRIAN KINGSHIP IN THE CHRONICLES DURING THE REIGN OF HENRY IV 96

IV.1 Introduction 96

IV.2 Kingship and the Principle of "Common Good" 99

IV.3 Lancastrian Usurpation and the Common Good 106

IV.4 Adam Usk, the Common Good and Lancastrian Kingship 110

IV.5 Walsingham and the Common Good as a Parliamentary Debate 117

IV.6 Common Good and the Chamber Scene in the *Eulogium*: A Deliberate Lancastrian Attack on Ricardian Kingship? 126

IV.7 *Eulogium* and Common Good during the Reign of Henry IV 132

IV.8 "Common Good" in the *London Chronicles*, the *Brut* and *An English Chronicle* 136

CHAPTER V: THE PRINCIPLE OF COMMON GOOD IN THE CHRONICLES WRITTEN DURING THE REIGNS OF HENRY V AND HENRY VI 143

V.I Introduction 143

V.2 Henry V and Covert Criticism of Lancastrian Kingship 144

V.3 Emergence of the "Common Weal" as a Concept in the Chronicles of the Reign of Henry VI 158

CHAPTER VI: FORMAL REPRESENTATION OF LANCASTRIAN KINGS IN THE CHRONICLES: LANCASTRIAN PROPAGANDA? 167

VI.1 Introduction 167

VI.2 Coronation of Henry IV in the Chronicles 172

VI.3 Holy Oil Used in the Coronation of Henry 182

VI.4 Formal Display of Henry V 190

VI.5 Henry's Royal Entry after the Battle of Agincourt 192

VI.6 Formal Display of Henry VI 199

CHAPTER IV: CONCLUSION 207

BIBLIOGRAPHY 214

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The Lancastrian period, which began with the usurpation of Henry IV in 1399 and ended with the deposition of his grandson Henry VI in 1461, was one of the most significant periods in English history. This period witnessed a series of formative developments and events such as attempts by the Lancastrian dynasty to legitimise its position on the throne, the conflicts between central government and regional powers, the Hundred Years War, the Lollard heresy and the Wars of the Roses.[1] Despite the formative importance of the period, Lancastrian history writing has been largely neglected and ignored for a number of reasons that I will discuss below. Furthermore, the chronicles of the period have been considered as products of Lancastrian propaganda. Therefore, the main subject and intention of this thesis will be to reconsider historical writing produced in Lancastrian England in the light of current approaches in historiographical studies.

In this Introduction, firstly, I will give a brief sketch of the historical context in which the chroniclers of the Lancastrian period wrote. This will contribute to a better understanding of the themes that I will analyse throughout the thesis.

[1] The most recent and best general surveys of the fifteenth - century England are Gerald Harriss, *Shaping the Nation, England 1360-1461* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2005). Michael Hicks, *English Political Culture in the Fifteenth Century* (New York: Routledge, 2002). A.J Pollard. *Late Medieval England 1399-1509* (Harlow: Longman, 2000).There are still some other valuable older sources like E.F. Jacob, *the Fifteenth Century 1399-1485* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993). Maurice H. Keen, *England in the Later Middle Ages: A Political History* (London: Methuen, 1973).

Secondly, I will touch upon the secondary literature on the historiography of the period and try to show the weaknesses in modern historical scholarship despite the publication of some seminal works. Thirdly, I will discuss the primary sources and present the main argument of this thesis. I will challenge the pejorative impression of the chroniclers of the Lancastrian period that these works were mere propaganda texts in the service of the Lancastrian government.

I.1 Historical Background

Lancastrian rule in England began in September of 1399 when Richard II was deposed by Henry Bolingbroke, the son of John of Gaunt, who was the son of Edward III and the Duke of Lancaster. It continued until 1461 when Edward of York deposed Henry VI though Henry was restored to his position for a short time from 1470 to 1471. Eventually, the Lancastrian dynasty ended when Henry was imprisoned and died after the defeat of the Lancastrian side at the Battle of Tewkesbury in 1471. Under Lancastrian rule - three Henrys, Henry IV, V and VI - reigned England successively.

In general terms, the problems of legitimisation of the dynasty, the war against France and financial distress basically shaped the politics of the Lancastrian dynasty.[2] The deposition of Richard II had a significant impact on the politics and administrative structure of fifteenth-century England because Henry's usurpation signified a radical break from the dynastic succession in England, which had passed in an unbroken line from father to son or grandson since 1199 when King John became the king.[3] Henry violated the rule and tradition of primogeniture by coming

[2] Edward Powell, "Lancastrian England," in *The New Cambridge Medieval History c.1415-c.1500.* ed. Christopher Allmand (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2005), 457-476.
[3] *Ibid*., 457-476.

to the throne by force.[4] For this reason, he tried to legitimise his usurpation since he came to the throne on the grounds that he was "descended in the right line of blood from Henry III; second, through that right, God had sent him to recover it; and third, the realm was on the point of being undone for want of good government."[5] However, these arguments were not sufficient. He had to secure the support of the powerful magnates to secure the control of the realm. The problem of legitimisation and his dependence on the support of the local powers determined the politics of Henry IV's rule. In this process, firstly, some aristocrats, like John of Holland and Montagu of Salisbury, revolted against him during the Epiphany Plot in 1400. Later, Owen Glendower revolted in Wales by claiming himself to be the Prince of Wales. Lastly, the northern magnate family, the Percies, and Richard Scrope, Archbishop of York, who had supported and played an important role in the usurpation of Henry IV, rebelled against the central government in 1403 and in 1405 respectively due to their dissatisfaction with the privileges they had been given.[6] These examples show us how the Lancastrian dynasty was founded on shaky foundations.

The legitimacy, as king, of Henry IV was still the dominant theme in the rebellions of the Percies and Archbishop Scrope. From 1399 to 1406, there was certainly a general disappointment in royal expenditure and lack of government in the country, and the root of the dissatisfaction was financial problems. On the one hand, Henry's heavy dependence on his Lancastrian affinity led to a growing criticism of his kingship due to the fact that his retainers were receiving a great part

[4] *Ibid*., 477-476.
[5] *Ibid*., 457-476.
[6] Keen, *England in the Later Middle Ages*, 304-310. For the Epiphany Plot see Peter McNiven, "The Cheshire Rising of 1400," *Bulletin of John Rylands Library* 52 (1970), 375-96. For the revolt of Owen Glendower, R.R. Davies, *The Revolt of Owain Glyn Dwr* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997). For the Percy Rebellion, see Simon Walker," Rumour, Sedition and Popular Protest in the Reign of Henry IV," *Past and Present* 166 (2000), 31-65. One of the best analyses of Archbishop Scrope's rebellion is Peter McNiven, "The Betrayal of Archbishop Scrope," *The Bulletin of John Rylands Library* 54 (1971), 173-213.

of the rewards.[7] On the other hand, for the expenses of military campaigns against the revolts of the Scots and the Welsh and the rebellion of the Percies, Henry always needed money.[8] In many cases, Henry often asked the Commons for tax grants and subsidies. In parliament, the Commons were very outspoken and criticised the fiscal policies of Henry IV and his private expenditures.[9] In this sense, the early years of Henry IV's were years of dissatisfaction and disappointment. After the 1405 rebellion and the execution of Scrope, the Lancastrian dynasty was not seriously challenged by rebellions and the revolts. What we can describe as the second part of Henry IV's reign between 1406 and 1413, was a relatively stable period, in a sense, a period of rehabilitation and normalisation. The most important issues in these years, as can be understood very clearly from the chronicles, were the attempts to end the Great Schism and the matter of Anglo-Burgundian relations.[10]

Besides, the rising power of the Prince of Wales, the later king Henry V, in government affairs, after the deteriorating conditions of his father's health, was another key issue. Prince Henry and his friends wanted an active foreign policy against the French but this was resisted by Archbishop Arundel, the chancellor, a close supporter of Henry IV. The tension became apparent when Henry IV summoned a parliament to re-assert his authority against the Prince and his faction. The Prince was dismissed from the king's council and the Commons, who supported the Prince, were forced to re-submit to Henry's authority. However, the conflict for

[7] Harris, *Shaping the Nation*, 496.
[8] Jacob, *The Fifteenth Century*, 74.
[9] A. Rogers, "Henry IV, the Commons and Taxation," *Medieval Studies* 31 (1969), 44-70. Keen, *England in the Later Middle Ages*, 316.
[10] Jacob, *The Fifteenth Century*, 90. There is no systematic and complete analysis of Anglo-French relations in the reign of Henry IV. See Jacob, *ibid.*, 106-114. Henry IV, by 1408, decided to interfere in the issue of Great Schism. For a good summary of the issue see J.J.N. Palmer," England and the Great Western Schism," *English Historical Review* LXXXIII (1968), 516-522.

political power between Henry IV and the Prince of Wales went on until the death of Henry IV in 1413.[11]

When Henry V came to the throne in 1413, the Lancastrian dynasty was not in an unstable position. It is true that until 1415, the Lollard uprising of Sir John Oldcastle, who had been previously one of the leading figures of royal court, and the Southampton Plot of 1415, which was organised by Richard, Earl of Cambridge and Henry, Lord Scrope of Masham, created some problems for the Lancastrian government.[12] However, these were not serious challenges. Henry V was, after all the true heir to the throne and did not have to deal with the problem of legitimacy that his father experienced. He could easily establish his authority in the realm.[13]

As he came to the throne, he reconciled with the heirs of the enemies of his father such as Thomas, the Earl of Salisbury and John Mowbray, the Earl Marshal.[14] In the first parliament, which met in 1413, he promised his subjects good government. He strictly controlled the revenues and the expenses of the Crown. Henry's great desire throughout his reign was the conquest of France. Finally, with the Treaty of Troyes in 1420, by which he agreed with Charles VI of France (his father-in-law) that he and his heirs would also become the heirs to the French throne. Thus, he was able to achieve the Plantagenet claim to the French throne.[15] On the other hand, a relatively peaceful administration in England was established. In complete contrast to Henry IV, who had the support and loyalty of a limited group of soldiers and servants, Henry V secured a wider support from the aristocracy. There were two main reasons behind this support: his ability in government as a leader and

[11] Harris, *Shaping the Nation*, 501-505.
[12] For a detailed analysis of Southampton Plot, look T.B. Pugh, "The Southampton Plot of 1415,"in *Kings and Nobles in the Later Middle Ages* eds. R.A. Griffiths and J. Sherborne (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1986), 167-204. For the Lollardy, Harris, *Shaping the Nation*, 395-404.
[13] Pollard, *Late Medieval England*, 70.
[14] *Ibid*., 70.
[15] *Ibid*., 71-87.

his success against the France in the Hundred Years War, particularly at the Battle of Agincourt in 1415.[16]

The reign of Henry V also witnessed the cooperation between secular administration and ecclesiastical power in oppressing the heretical group of Lollardy. All these factors helped establish a political stability and security in internal affairs. Now, the themes of unity and a form of nationhood (the concept of nation in the modern sense is very tricky and I do not mean this; I just want to stress the sense of being a community on a piece of land) gained prominence in the country.[17] However, as one modern historian has suggested very rightly, the image of Henry V's reign as the Indian Summer between the two turbulent reigns of Henry IV and Henry VI needs some revision.[18] The achievements of Henry V's reign depended heavily on the personal leadership and abilities of the king. Besides, there were still some objections to the war economy of Henry V despite its returns. For example, when he demanded extra tax from his subjects in the Parliament of 1421, his request was refused and he tried to find other source of incomes to finance the war.[19]

With the minority of his son, Henry VI, England entered into a period of turmoil. The relatively stable and peaceful period of Henry V was replaced by the chaotic rule of Henry VI after the death of Henry V. Henry VI was a child king of both England and France, just about nine months old, after the deaths of his father Henry V and his grandfather Charles VI. The period between 1422-1437 saw the minority rule of Henry VI under the regency of his two uncles, John, the Duke of Bedford, who was responsible for the governance of England, and Humphrey, the Duke of Gloucester, the protector of England. The internal divisions between the

[16] Powell, "Lancastrian England," 457-476.
[17] Christopher Allmand, *Henry V* (London: Methuen, 1992), 404- 425.
[18] Jacob, *The Fifteenth Century*, 121.
[19] Pollard, *Late Medieval England*, 85.

aristocratic factions at court - especially the issue of the continuation of the French war turned into a power struggle particularly between Duke Gloucester and Cardinal Beaufort. The failures in the wars against France, financial breakdown, corruption and demand of people for a just administration led to the weakening of Lancastrian dynasty.[20]

During the majority of Henry VI, the factional conflicts continued. When England lost its lands in France, Jack Cade's Rebellion broke out in 1450 and this was clear evidence of popular dissatisfaction with the king. The common people started to seek for the maintenance of justice for the common good.[21] Although it is possible to see the years between 1451-1453 as aperiod of recovery, everything completely changed after 1453. Henry VI had a serious mental illness and this would cause some questioning of his title to the throne. Both the mental illness and the mismanagement of the country and the growing discontent among the people strenghthened the position of Richard, the duke of York, who was sent to Ireland as the governor by Henry VI . Richard became protector of the country in 1453 and was still the most important figure in the administration until 1460. The Yorkists challenged the Lancastrian government claiming hereditary right, and promising to maintain the justice and to observe the common good of the subjects in the realm.[22]

The process of Wars of the Roses between the Lancastrians and Yorkists was motivated by these factional divisions and it ended with the victory of Henry Tudor against the Yorkists and the establishment of the Tudor dynasty in England in

[20] Ralph A. Griffiths, *The Reign of Henry VI: The Exercise of Royal Authority, 1422- 1461* (Los Angeles: California University Press, 1981), 18-50.
[21] Alexander L. Kaufmann, *The Historical Literature of the Jack Cade Rebellion* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), 75-83.
[22] Bertram Wolffe, *Henry VI* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981), 223-286.

1485.[23] This brief description of the Lancastrian period shows how the balance of power continuously changed in the period. It changed from the political instability of Henry IV's reign to the relatively peaceful and stable administration of Henry V and later the regime collapsed in the period of Henry VI due to internal divisions, problems and external failures. Like his grandfather, Henry VI had to tackle the problem of legitimisation.

I.2 Modern Scholarly Perception of Fifteenth - Century England

Due to the tumultuous events and burdens of the time, the teleological and meta-narrative Whig interpretation of history has deeply influenced the view of historians of fifteenth-century England in a negative sense despite some changes observed in recent literature. The period has been considered as a scene of anarchy and disorder, a setback in the peaceful evolution and progress of British history from the medieval to the modern period. This perception has had implications not only in the attitudes and approaches to the political and socio-economic history of the period but also in the assessment of the historical writing. Thus, the historical output of fifteenth-century England has been regarded as relatively worthless and the insignificant products of a transition period from the medieval to the early modern. For instance, in his general survey, *Conflict and Stability in Fifteenth-Century England*, one of the most prolific modern historians of fifteenth-century English history, J.R. Lander stated that the fifteenth century "will probably remain one of the obscure centuries of English history" owing to the imperfection and incompleteness of the political

[23] Anthony Goodman, *The Wars of the Roses: Military Activity and English Society 1451-97* (London: Routledge, 1981), 86-116. The reign of Yorkist king Edward IV has generally been considered as exception to the decay of government and kingship in the fifteenth century. The historians have inclined to see his reign as a stable period. For a balanced evaluation of Edward IV's kingship see C.D. Ross, "The Reign of Edward IV," in *Fifteenth Century England 1399-1509: Studies in Politics and Society*, eds. S.B. Chrimes, C.D. Ross and R.A. Griffiths (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1972), 49-66.

narratives, notably the chronicles giving contemporary information concerning the political events of the time.[24]

However, there has been an evident explosion in fifteenth-century studies since Bruce McFarlane and his students started to research the political and socio-economic history of the period drawing on the abundant variety of relatively uninvestigated primary sources. Despite the eruption and pervasiveness of the meticulous and painstaking studies concerning fifteenth-century England in the history departments of universities, this sort of negation of the narrative sources has continued to be a general propensity and conviction among historians.[25]

The tenacity of this inclination has persisted even in recent surveys of the period, including some written during the last decade. For instance, in the introduction to his book related to the modern historiography and sources of the period, *Late Medieval England 1399-1509*, A.J. Pollard has given us one of the best examples of this tendency though he seems more optimistic than Lander. While he stresses that these narrative sources are "incomplete and unreliable", he has given credence to those historical narratives as the most essential sources of the political history. However, he has approached these sources cautiously.

According to Pollard, these sources are uncertain and partial due to the fact that the basic accounts of the Lancastrian usurpation have a pro-Lancastrian bias and those of the deposition of Henry VI are Yorkist.[26] For this reason, Pollard argues that the historical narratives of the period should be used very carefully since the main problem with these sources is their lack of impartiality. Such an interpretation and evaluation of the historical narratives actually reflects a methodological perception

[24] J. R. Lander, *Conflict and Stability in Fifteenth-Century England* (London: Hutchinson, 1977), 17.
[25] For the influence of McFarlane on the fifteenth century scholarship, see Colin Richmond, "After McFarlane," *History* 68 (1983), 46-60.
[26] Pollard, *Late Medieval England,* 10.

inherent in modern historical scholarship. Historians of fifteenth-century England - perhaps under the influence of the old-fashioned tradition of giving the archival material utmost importance and status - have either tended to accept the information given in these sources at face value because of their quality as primary sources or they have benefited from these narratives as minor sources for a comparison to test the accuracy and authenticity of the archival documents in the historical research.

Yet, since Nancy Partner's study of twelfth-century English historiography[27] and Gabrielle Spiegel's publications on late-medieval French historical-writing,[28] historians of different periods of pre-modern history have begun to consider historical narratives as research subjects which deserve to be examined as separate historical sources. The studies of the literary critics and historians from Brian Stock to Marjorie Reeves have focused on the importance of various themes from the connection between oral culture and written records to function of the prophecies in medieval historical writing.[29]

In the light of these kinds of studies, the historical sources can no longer be assessed only as transparent and additional material for writing monographs. They should be regarded as primary sources valuable and significant in themselves. In that way, the historians could have the knowledge of how the people understood the period in which they lived and how they constructed a complete and consistent view of their present and past by investigating those historical narratives. This is important

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[27] Nancy F. Partner, *Serious Entertainments: The Writing of History in Twelfth-Century England* (Chicago University Press: Chicago, 1977).

[28] Gabrielle Spiegel, *The Past As Text: The Theory and Practice of Medieval Historiography* (Johns Hopskins University Press: Baltimore, 1999) and *Romancing the Past: The Rise of Vernacular Prose Historiography in Thirteenth-Century France* (University of California Press: Berkeley, 1993).

[29] For an illustration of the recent literature on medieval historiography see Brian Stock, *Listening for the Text: On the Uses of the Past* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press). Peter Damian-Grint, *The New Historians of the Twelfth Century Renaissance* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press,1999). Edward Donald Kennedy, "Romancing the Past: A Medieval English Perspective," in *The Medieval Chronicle: Proceedings of the First International Congress on the Medieval Chronicle* ed. Erik Kooper (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1999). Marjorie Reeves, *The Prophetic Sense of History in Medieval and Renaissance Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992).

because historical narratives reflect a particular social and intellectual context within which they were produced. Thus, to examine these sources as a subject of historiographical research in the sense of text-context relationship would contribute to perceiving the mentality of the period within which they were written as well as the narrative strategies they used to communicate their views on various subjects.

Given these, there are two basic reasons for me to choose a historiographical examination of the narrative sources of Lancastrian England as the research subject for this thesis. One is the relative neglect of historical-writing for methodological reasons, and the other one is the importance and convenience of the Lancastrian period for such a kind of study. When compared to the earlier periods of English history, the primary material as documents or narrative sources have been less exploited. This shows a lacuna in the historical studies related to the fifteenth century. In the large amount of research on Lancastrian England, the historical narratives have been regarded as having secondary importance and they have been neglected or ignored as historical sources in themselves. This does not mean that the products of historical writing have not been used. Conversely, especially some of them have been used to explain certain basic characteristics of the period. However, they have been regarded as more propagandistic pieces and have not generally been the subject of historiographical study. So, there is not any comprehensive work investigating the basic characteristics of historiography during the Lancastrian rule as well as the inadequacy of the thematic studies and the historical narratives require attention.

I.3 Modern Scholarly Literature on the Historiography of Lancastrian Period and Propaganda

The sources of historical writing produced during the Lancastrian rule have not hitherto been a subject of thematic study in terms of certain striking points included in them. Rather, they have been considered to be propagandistic texts conveying the partisan opinions of the authors. Propaganda is a protean and slippery concept. Though this modern concept means today the manipulation of popular opinion by the dissemination of distorted and false information, the historians of our modern age have continuously and anachronistically employed the term propaganda to label contemptuously historical-writing produced in the Lancastrian period. Moreover, they have assumed the propagandistic purposes of texts as if they had been "constant throughout the ages."[30]

This perception of Lancastrian historical works has been reinforced by Tudor historical understanding related to the fifteenth-century England and this was likewise called Tudor Propaganda.[31] But, the interesting point is that over the centuries, this Tudor point of view was accepted as historical truth while the Lancastrian interpretation of present and past has been disdained. According to the Tudor understanding of the period, like modern historical scholarship dealing with fifteenth - century England, as a Tudor historian, Edward Hall wrote: "England hath suffered by the division and dissension of the renowned Houses of Lancaster and York".[32] For Tudor historians, Henry VII and Henry VIII ended the anarchy and disorder of this civil strife by leading the way to a more peaceful administration of

[30] Anthony Gross, *The Dissolution of the Lancastrian Kingship: Sir John Fortescue and the Crisis of Monarchy in Fifteenth-Century England* (Paul Watkins: Stamford, 1996), 27–28.
[31] For a short discussion of how the propaganda was used in Tudor period see: Philip M. Taylor, *Munitions of the Mind: A History of Propaganda from the Ancient World to the Present Day* (Manchester University Press: Manchester, 2003), 102-109. For Tudors' understanding of medieval past look at: May McKisack, *Medieval History in the Tudor Age* (Clarendon Press: Oxford, 1971).
[32] Cited in Pollard, *Late Medieval England*, 2.

the country. This Tudor-centred and oriented view of the period sought to legitimize the Tudor regime established in the late fifteenth century and was disseminated by other Tudor writers such as Holinshed or Polydore Vergil. This perception was embedded paradoxically in the historical perception of the later periods for a negative view of the fifteenth century.

As for the historical writing in the Lancastrian period, the historical productions of the period have been regarded as propaganda material employed either for internal affairs in terms of their function in legitimizing and establishing the Lancastrian regime or written for war propaganda against the external enemy, France. We can see the typical example of this approach to the Lancastrian texts in Antonia Gransden's article "Propaganda in Medieval English Medieval Historiography". Here, Gransden evaluated Thomas Walsingham's *Chronica Maiora* and the anonymous *Eulogium Historiarum* as Lancastrian political tracts written in favour of Henry IV and against Richard II because these sources took their information from the *Record and Process* entered into the *Rotuli Parliamentorum* (*Parliament Rolls*) disseminated by the Lancastrian government. According to Gransden, propaganda is predominant in these historical works and stresses the unquestionable power and influence of royal government deriving from the quality of the personal power of king and royal authority in general terms.[33]

Likewise, P.S. Lewis, in his study "War Propaganda and Historiography in Fifteenth Century France and England" considers English historical works written in the first half of the century as tracts fabricated by "emotional propagandists hastened to fan the flames of patriotism and xenophobia."[34] This interpretation of Lancastrian

[33] Antonia Gransden, "Propaganda in English Medieval Historiography", *Journal of Medieval History* 1 (1975), 363-82.
[34] P.S. Lewis, "War, Propaganda and Historiography in Fifteenth Century France and England", *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 15 (1962), 1-21.

texts has influenced the subsequent literature. One of the most prolific modern historians of late medieval English historical writing, Edward Donald Kennedy, without giving any concrete evidence, has claimed that the state and church manipulated the chroniclers for their pragmatic purposes.[35] Without a detailed discussion of the literature, it can be asserted that the propagandistic nature of the narratives has been much less the main interest of modern historiography.

Apart from this, the historians have generally made editions and critiques of these sources until recent decades. We can just mention Chris Given-Wilson's *Chronicles* as a historiographical study and a very significant contribution in giving a a general perception of the written texts of this period. Given-Wilson discusses the significant subjects and themes, from the problem of genealogical histories to their language and form, for some chronicles of late medieval England and concludes his work with the 1420s.[36] Similarly, in recent years, some researchers have the analysed these narrative sources in terms of their language, the basic motivations behind them and the patronage of the authors. But, the problem with these studies is that they have been done not by the historians but by literary scholars. Moreover, they have chosen particularly the literary figures of the period such as Chaucer or Lydgate as a natural consequence of their research interests. Nevertheless, in their works, they touch only briefly upon some of the writings of the chroniclers or historians of the period.[37]

Two works, which also have significance with regard to historical scholarship, can be suggested here. These are Paul Strohm's *England's Empty Throne* and Jenni Nuttall's *The Creation of Lancastrian Kingship*. In both of these works, the authors

[35] Edward Donald Kennedy, "Romancing the Past," in *Medieval Chronicle*, ed. Erik Kooper, 13-39.
[36] Chris Given-Wilson, *Chronicles: The Writing of History in Medieval England* (London: Hambledon, 2004).
[37] For example, see A. Helmbold, "Chaucer Appropriated: The *Troilus* Frontispiece as Lancastrian Propaganda," Studies *in the Age of Chaucer* 30 (2008), 205-234. Mauro Nolan, *John Lydgate and the Making of Public Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

offer discourse analyses of Lancastrian texts in terms of how they used certain concepts or events to legitimize the Lancastrian usurpation. Strohm, following the traditional historiographical perception, considers almost all the historical and literary texts written during the reign of the Lancastrians as propagandistic texts. However, in particular, Nuttall evaluates and reads these texts in the light of Pocockian terminology of linguistic context, which means to read the texts having political content with other related texts of the period and comes to a conclusion that the Lancastrian historical-writing in the reign of Henry IV was written not just to glorify the Crown and not solely a propagandistic content to legitimize the usurpation. Rather, they had constructed a language of narration in themselves and also used self-evident concepts in the texts such as "failure, unsuccessful, dishonest and selfish" not only for a criticism of Ricardian rule but also to oppose the Lancastrian king in the case of misgovernment.[38] Such rare studies on historiography of the period urge us to think again about a re-evaluation of Lancastrian historical-writing as an area for historiographical research in itself and calls for the interrogation of the already well-established idea that the historical sources were propaganda.

I.4 Chronicles and Historians of the Lancastrian Period

Before passing onto the discussion of my themes, ideas and thesis questions, it is necessary to outline the major sources I have used in this thesis and to make a clear explanation of their place in medieval historical-writing. It is not necessary to give

[38] Paul Strohm, *England's Empty Throne: Usurpation and the Language of Legitimation, 1399–1422* (Yale University Press: New Haven, 1998). and Jenni Nuttall, *The Creation of Lancastrian Kingship: Literature, Language and Politics in Late Medieval England* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2007).

the full details of the biographies of the chroniclers but some general points, which are directly concerned with my thesis subject, are be mentioned here.

My study will focus mostly on the major chronicles produced in Lancastrian England from 1399 to 1461 as well as some minor ones - since I will refer to such minor sources as *John Strecche's Chronicle* and the *Westminster Chronicle* very occassionally, it is unnnecessary to describe them. For the reign of Henry IV, I will draw heavily upon three major chronicles in detail, which are the most comprehensive narratives for the years between 1399-1413. These are Thomas Walsingham's the *Chronica Maiora*, *Adam Usk's Chronicle* and the Continuation of the *Eulogium Historiarum*.

Undoubtedly, Thomas Walsingham's *Chronica Maiora* is the most significant authoritative text for the period that I will examine. However, since there are some surviving early manuscripts of his work and he did not explicitly add his name in the manuscripts that he composed,[39] there is no consensus among historians about which of them were actually written by Walsingham. It is known from the history of the monastery of St. Albans, the *Gesta Abbatum*, that Walsingham was responsible for the compilation of the archival materials available in the library of the monastery and for the production of manuscripts on various subjects from history to theology.[40] However, in the most recent editon of the *Chronica Maiora*, the editors have discussed the identity of the relevant manuscripts and by a comparison of the surviving manuscripts of *Chronica Maiora*, they have come to the conclusion that all of them were written under the directorship of Walsingham.[41] Therefore, I will

[39] James G. Clark, "Introduction," in *The Chronica Maiora of Thomas Walsingham 1376-1422*, Trans.David Preest with Introduction by James G. Clark (Woodbridge: Boydell Press,2005), 1-24.
[40]Cited in *ibid*. 1-24.
[41] For the discussion of the authorship of *Chronica Maiora* and the other manuscripts particularly see *The St.Albans Chronicle: The Chronica Maiora of Thomas Walsingham II 1394-1422,* eds. John Taylor, Wendy R.Childs and Leslie Watkiss (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2011), xix-xcviii.

follow this recent opinion and will heavily use this editon for my study as well as the other very recent edition of the work, which was made by the biographer of Walsingham, James G. Clark and David Preest.

Walsingham's *Chronica Maiora* covers the period from the last months of Edward III in 1376 until just after the death of Henry V in 1422. In this sense, his work is valuable not only for the reign of Henry IV but also for the reign of Henry V. Another value of Walsingham's history is that it relates most of the important European events such as the detailed narratives of the Councils of Pisa and Constance, which had been held in 1409 and 1414-1417 to find a solution to the Great Schism.[42] Walsingham was a monk and precentor at St.Albans Abbey. As such his work was the link in the chain of the monastic tradition writing dating back to the *Chronica Maiora* of Matthew Paris. Like Matthew Paris, who started to write his work in the midst of the baronial wars, Walsingham began to write as a response to the hightening political tension after the accession of Richard II.[43]

Walsingham's aim in writing his chronicles cannot be understood fully from his work. However, it can be argued that it was to record the major political, religious and social events of his time, since he had easy access to the rich primary sources of the Abbey, as well as his desire to continue the monastic tradition of writing a chronicle.[44] Therefore, his audience was solely the limited number of the monks living in the monastery. The number of the manuscripts attributed to Walsingham has not been certainly determined, but from the editons that the historians have published from the existing manuscripts it is understood that his chronicle was not disseminated widely.

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[42] For example, see *ibid*., 565-569 and 703-713.
[43] Clark, "Introduction," *Chronica Maiora*, 1-24.
[44] Walsingham had five main sources for the information. These are the *Parliament Rolls* and some other documents circulated in England, the archive of the Abbey, the newsletters and the eye-witnesses coming to the St.Albans. *The St.Albans Chronicle*, xix-xcviii.

Additionally, it should be indicated that he constantly revised his manuscript after he had begun writing according to the changing political conditons of his time and completed it in the 1420s. The obvious evidence for this is his omission of the critical, sometimes, pejorative descriptions of John of Gaunt, the father of Henry IV, from the original copy of his work in the late 1390s.[45]

There was a sensible reason for this. Walsingham was not the official historian of St.Albans but he was naturally influenced by the political atmosphere. In the late 1390s, the abbots of St.Albans such as Moot and de La Mare became more tied with the Lancastrians and this was the main reason for his revisions in the text.[46] Perhaps, for this reason, Walsingham did certainly avoid commenting on events particularly happening during the reign of Lancastrian kings. Although Walsingham, in his chronicle, appealed explicitly only to his fellow monks, the scope of his work was beyond his monastery. He was highly interested in the political events of his time. His chronicle was actually the political, religious and social history of England between 1376 and 1422.[47] Walsingham's chronicle, with its content and narrative, is the most important source for my argument that the chronicles written during the Lancastrian rule were not Lancastrian propagandistic texts.

Another major source for both the reigns of both Henry IV and Henry V is the chronicle of Adam of Usk.[48] Usk's chronicle starts with the accession of Richard II in 1377 and ends in 1421 just before the death of Henry V. Usk wrote his chronicle in autobigraphical form and reflects his own career progression along with the main events of the reigns of both Henry IV and Henry V. He was an ecclessiastical lawyer.

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[45] In one manuscript belong to the period before 1390s, there are harsh criticism of John Gaunt, the father of Henry IV. For this reason, this has been called as "Scandalous Chronicle" by the historians. The evidence from this chronicle will be employed in the main body of the thesis. *The St.Albans Chronicle*, xix-xcviii.
[46] Clark, "Introduction," *Chronica Maiora*, 1-24.
[47] *Ibid*., 1-24
[48] *The Chronicle of Adam Usk, 1377-1421*, ed. Chris Given-Wilson (Oxford:Clarendon Press, 1997).

The importance of Usk's chronicle comes from the fact that he was an eye-witness of many events that he told such as the deposition of Richard II in 1399 and the royal entry of Henry V into England in 1415. Usk's early career progression and his disappointment in this process determined the content of his chronicle – the most important of them was that he was excommunicated by Pope Gregory XII for alleged sympathy and connection with the supporters of the Avignon Papacy and he drew the reaction of Henry IV because of the claim of his sympathy for Owain Glendower's Welsh rebellion; and obtained the pardon of Henry IV in 1408.[49]

He received his education during the Ricardian period under the patronage of the earl of March, who was elevated by the opponents of Bolingbroke as the rival candidate to the English throne against Bolingbroke. This will be discussed in Chapter 2, Usk gives a detailed geneaology of the earls of the March back to Adam in his chronicle. On the other hand, he served as an advocate in the Court of Arches for the archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Arundel, the closest ally and later the chancellor of Henry IV. In the process of the deposition of Richard II, he was appointed by Bolingbroke to the committee making the legal arrangements for Richard's deposition.[50] His chronicle is far from being a Lancastrian narrative. As will be discussed throughout the thesis, his autobigraphical work includes many entries which had critical implications for both Henry IV and Henry V, though the criticisms were not be articulated explicitly. Besides, it should be noted that there is just one surviving copy of his work. There is no evidence to suggest that he wished the circulate his chronicle. The audience of the chronicle was perhaps his family and friends.[51] The motivation for writing may be the recording of his personal career.

[49] See *ibid*., 213-215.
[50] Given-Wilson, "Introduction," in *Adam Usk*, xiii-xciii. For the details of this, see Chapter 2.
[51] *Ibid.,* xiii-xciii.

In addition, the Continuation of the *Eulogium Historiarum*, which covers the period from 1361 to 1413 and was presumably written by a Franciscan monk from the convent of the Grey Friars in Canterbury, can also be counted as another example of the historical-writing in the Lancastrian period. Though it is not possible to determine the exact date of its compilation, it seems that most of the work was written after the Lancastrian usurpation.[52] Like Walsingham's chronicle, the audience of the compiler seems to have been the members of his convent. It was not disseminated widely. There are just five surviving manuscripts of this work. The chronicle does not contain eye-witness accounts, unlike Adam Usk's chronicle, but the author did have access to primary documents and first-hand information coming from the eye-witnesses visiting Canterbury. In this sense, its content is valuable. It must be stressed that the chronicle does not only offer us the details of Ricardian period but also contains very striking entries, which cannot be found in the other chronicles such as the formal display of Richard II, which has been traditonally considered evidence of Richard II's tyrannical kingship and despotism. This issue will be analysed in Chapter 4 of the thesis. Besides, there are many other entries, which include criticism of Henrician administatrative policies as is shown in Chapter 4. In this sense, this chronicle includes anti-Lancastrian entries as well anti-Ricardian ones.

For the reign of Henry V, Walsingham's chronicle is the best account because it covers the whole period with many details. At the same time, Usk's chronicle can be regarded as a useful source. Apart from these, I will extensively use the chronicles written in the form of biographies of Henry V. These biographies reflect, in a sense, the royal and governmental perspective. However, it is impossible to assert definitely

[52] Antonia Gransden, Historical *Writing in England II c. 1307 to the Early Sixteenth Century* (London: Routledge, 1982), 158. *Eulogium Historiarum Sive Temporis*, Vol: III, ed. Frank Scott Haydon (London: Longman, 1863).

that they were produced under the patronage of the royal court but rather produced in a very close social environment to the king. The anonymous *Gesta Henrici Quinti*,[53] which was probably written by a clerk linked to the central government, and prior Thomas Elmham's *Liber Metricus* (Metrical Life) of Henry V, are typical examples of such biographical work.

The *Gesta* covers the period from 1413 to 1416. The work was most probably completed in 1417. The author of the text is unknown but from the internal evidence in the text, it is understood that he was a priest, very close to the court.[54] It starts with the coronation of Henry V and ends with the Parliament of 1416. The great portion of the work deals with Henry's deeds, a detailed account of the Battle of Agincourt, and Henry V's meeting with Holy Roman Emperor Sigismund to negotiate a solution to the problem of the Great Schism and England's relations with France. The author of the *Gesta* was an eye-witness of the events that he narrated. For instance, he participated in the Battle of Agincourt with the king, he watched the royal entry into London of Henry V after the victory of Agincourt in 1415, and he was with the king when he met Sigismund.

The motivation of the author for writing is not clear. If the general structure of the narrative is examined, it can be said that his aim was to show Henry as a very pious king and to make some kind of a justification for his campaign against the French. This can be inferred from the internal evidence because the English as God's elect people and Henry, as the humble and devout subject of God on the right path, are the dominant themes running through the text. Since, the author of the text is not known, it is really difficult to determine the intended audience of the chronicle.

[53] For a discussion of the authorship, purpose and composition of *Gesta* see: Frank Taylor and John S. Roskell, eds. *Gesta Henrici Quinti* (Clarendon Press: Oxford, 1975), xv-xxviii.
[54] *Gesta Henrici Quinti: The Deeds of Henry V*, eds. Frank Taylor and John S. Roskell (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), 89.

There are just two surviving manuscripts of the work.[55] Possibly, by addressing the king's personal characteristics and piety, he was writing for his close friends and some literate men from court circles. Otherwise, it is not possible to think that he wanted to reach wider audience. I will frequently refer to the *Gesta* in the Chapters 5 and 6 since, on the one hand, it is an eye-witness account of the themes that I will analyse and, on the other hand, it likely drew upon archival materials and documentary sources because of its author's possible identity.

Another biographical chronicle for the reign of Henry V is Thomas Elmham's verse work, *Liber Metricus de Henrico Quinto* (Metrical Life of Henry V).[56] Little is known about Elmham's life. He was a monk of St. Augustine's of Canterbury, later he was the prior of the Cluaniac monastery of Lenton, and lastly, he became the vicar-general of the Cluaniacs in England and Scotland in 1415.[57] He dedicated his work to Henry V,[58] and his chronicle covers the whole of Henry's reign. The narrative revolves around Henry V's military actions. There are many similarities of his chronicle with the *Gesta* for the years between 1413-1416. For this reason, some scholars, despite the lack of evidence, have attributed the *Gesta* to Elmham but this has not been a common view today. Elmham was not an eye-witness of the events he narrated but it is possible to think that Elmham could have obtained a copy of the *Gesta* and constructed his narrative until 1416 on the basis of the eye-witness account of its anonymous author. Unlike the other chroniclers of the period, Elmham clearly states his purpose for writing his chronicle in the introduction part of it.

[55] *Ibid*., xv.
[56] Thomas Elmham, "Liber Metricus de Henrico Quinto," in *Memorials of Henry the Fifth*, ed. C.A. Cole (London: Rolls Series, 1858), 79-166.
[57] Gransden, *Historical Writing*, 206.
[58] *Ibid.,* 206.

> Therefore, the [events] that should [in fact] be sensibly explained to the subjects are turned into glorious deeds of the lords, so that the disposition of the people may not turn away from the due love and respect that should be observed toward princes and lords. However, the aforementioned most Christian King himself truly rejected that this should be done; he scarcely required me to vulgarize [the style of] these things that I write, so that it would [only] be under the watchful scrutiny of the nobles who had been present [there] that the naked and familiar truth about these deeds done in their times would reach the public, and so that popular opinion would not possibly regard the king's soul inflated with the pride of his singular fortune on account of [all] these things that God himself had conferred in victory upon him and his family.[59]

From this evidence, it is very obvious that he consciously avoided writing his chronicle for a wider audience and used an obscure and very difficult language as the style of writing. But, even though his purpose seems to be the moral edification of the ecclessiastical and literate laymen, his work was more popular than the other chronicles of the time. Interestingly, his work has survived in nine manuscripts.[60] Like the *Gesta*, I will use Elmham's chronicle for the themes in this thesis related to the reign of Henry V.

As for the reign of Henry VI, it should be indicated that the sources are of little very value. They are mostly fragmentery and do offer very sketchy accounts of the reign of Henry IV.[61] They are also the Continuations of the *Brut*, which I will describe below. For this reason, as it will be seen in the thesis, since there was not a major chronicle like *Chronica Maiora* of Thomas Walsingham or *Liber Metricus* of Thomas Elmham in this period, I kept the discussion and the analysis of the evidence from the chronicles of the reign of Henry VI very short as compared to the

[59] Elmham, "Liber Metricus," 80. Ut igitur affectio populorum a servandis principum et dominorum amore et reverential debitis non recedat, sane explananda subjectis sunct facta laudabilia dominorum. Hoc tamen realiter renuit faciendum praetactus Christianissimus ipse princeps Rex noster; vix mihi volens condescendere qui haec scribo, ut, solerti scrutamine nobelium qui interfuerant, nuda et noda veritas de his que sunt acta temporibus suis in publicum pertransiret; ne forte opinion popularis regium animum, ex his quae Deus ipse sibi et suis in Victoria contulit, aestimaret inflari extollentia singularis fortunae.

[60] Gransden, *Historical Writing*, 210.

[61] Charles L. Kingsford, *English Historical Literature in the Fifteenth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913), 140.

chronicles of the reigns of both Henry IV and Henry V. The reason for that there were no major chronicles for this period is the decline of the monastic chronicle tradition in England after Thomas Walsingham's chronicle.

Indeed, for the reign of Henry VI, apart from the *Brut* and the *London Chronicles*, John Hardyng's Chronicle may be regarded as the most important contemporary source for Henry VI's reign. Hardyng (1378-1465) was in the service of one of the the great local families of the period, the Percies and the Umfravilles. Though he started to write under Lancastrian rule, he completed his chronicle under Yorkist influence and presented it to Richard, the Duke of York.[62] His chronicle, like Elmham's, was written in verse. Hardyng is infamous due to the forgeries in his chronicle, especially some forged documents related to English overlordship over Scotland.[63] It should also be indicated that the real value of this source is not its account of the reign of Henry VI, but some of its entries on the reign of Henry IV, which cannot be found in the other chronicles of the period, such as the claim that Bolingbroke promised the Percies not to depose Richard II.[64] Such sort of information does not seem reliable, because the Percies were one of the closest allies of Bolingbroke when he returned from exile into England. In some cases, but not frequently, distinctive entries of Hardyng's chronicle will be employed in the thesis.

From the sources produced throughout the Lancastrian rule, the *Brut* or *Chronicles of England*, should be considered. The *Brut*, which was first composed in Anglo-Norman and later in Latin and in the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries in Middle English by anonymous writers in several manuscripts and very popular in

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[62] Sarah L. Peverley, "Dynasty and Division: The Depiction of King and Kingdom in John Hardyng's Chronicle" in *Medieval Chronicle III: Proceedings of the 3rd International Conference on the Medieval Chronicle Doom/Utrecht 12-17 July 2002*, ed. Erik Kooper (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2004), 149-170.
[63] Kingsford, *English Historical Literature*, 142.
[64] *The Chronicle of John Hardyng*, ed. Henry Ellis (London, 1812), 349-354.

medieval England, is an important and set of sources for their accounts of national events and as a representation of historical consciousness in medieval England.[65] The main purpose of the compilers of the *Brut* seems just to record the important national events in order to give information to the readers. The compilers of the *Brut* were most probably eye-witnesses of the events and one particularly, *An English Chronicle*, a version in the tradition of the *Brut*, covers the whole Lancastrian period.

Lastly, I should briefly mention the *London Chronicles*, which were essentially based on the chronicles written in Latin since the thirteenth century but which started to be written in Middle English in the first quarter of the fifteenth century. These anonymous city chronicles were written through the eyes of the developing merchant class of London. Of 44 surviving manuscripts of the *London Chronicles*, the author of only one, written by William Gregory, who was the mayor of London in the 1450s, has had its author identified.[66] Their structure resembles very much that of the *Brut*. Though they are not designed as national history and were mostly confined to the major events in the history of London, their accounts can also be regarded as part of national history because London was the capital city. Both the *Brut* and the *London Chronicles* will be used in the chapters related to Henry IV and Henry V since they were also contemporary with the reigns.

I.5 Late Medieval English Historical Writing

Given the general characteristics of the chronicles and the intentions of the authors of the chronicles that I will use in this thesis, it should also be indicated that it is difficult to determine a common term for the productions that we can describe as

[65] Julia Marvin, "The English Brut Tradition," in A *Companion to Arthurian Literature*, ed. Helen Fulton (Chichester: Blackwell, 2012), 221-234.
[66] Mary-Rose McLaren, *The London Chronicles of the Fifteenth Century: A Revolution in English Writing* (Cambridge: Boydell, 2002), 3.

historical-writing, particularly in late-medieval England because it is not easy to draw a sharp line between a chronicle and annals, rendering it difficult to make a precise definition of historical-writing. Furthermore, it becomes more difficult when we consider texts in verse like Thomas Elmham's *Liber Metricus de Henrico Quinto* and the *Gesta Henrici Quinti* which were written in biographical form, and have historical value.[67] Perhaps, due to this problematic nature of the narrative sources, Charles Kingsford called them simply "historical literature" and Antonia Gransden labelled them more reasonably as historical writings.[68]

However, some general characteristics can be determined by looking at the two main genres of chronicles and annals after putting aside the literary sources and short accounts of events. Although many of the medieval writers combined these two types of writing in their works and probably did not have a clear distinction for these in their minds, they have actually differences. These two main types of history-writing derived from the intention of keeping the records of the remembrance of the significant events or great names of the past. In fact, there were various forms of the memorialisation of the past such as the "creation of the public images and monuments" or the remembrance and recitation of the dead at the masses.[69] But, as historical narrative strategy, these two types depended on a long tradition of history-writing since classical antiquity. At the same time, they also drew upon the Judeo-Christian tradition of historical writing. So, medieval historiography was shaped in the early medieval West by a combination of the classical and Judeo-Christian tradition.

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[67] Cited in E.D. Kennedy, *A Manual of the Writings in Middle English: 1050-1500*, ed. Albert Hartung *Vol: VIII* (: New Haven: Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences, 1989), 3.
[68] *Ibid*, 3.
[69]Deborah Mauskopf Deliyannis," Introduction," in *Historiography in the Middle Ages*, ed. Deborah Mauskopf Deliyannis (Leiden: Brill 2002), 1.

Actually it is very difficult to make a certain separation of the genres of historical writing but it should be indicated that the annals are mainly coming from the short, historical entries for years in succession in Easter tables "to calculate the correct date for Easter", whereas the chronicles had more historical consciousness embodied in the Judeo-Christian tradition though they were usually written in chronological order similar to the annals.[70] For instance, within the limits of my study, the case of the *Brut* is a striking example of the difficulty in making a sharp distinction between the annal and chronicle since it was written in annalistic form as short entries, which are particularly important for the history of the English nation.

In an age when there was no clear distinction between literature and history, the chronicler was also a literary figure using biblical or classical allusions. Following the Christian concept of history and taking its notions such as the last judgement and eternal life, the chronicler's model for writing was the linear understanding of time in a predetermined and eschatological framework. Besides, in the Orosian tradition of historical-writing, the main purpose of the chronicler as a historian was to edify the reader. The historian should have moral instructive priorities. For this sake, the chronicler had to teach or inform the rulers by means of exemplary models of behaviour from the past. In this sense, the chronicler's intention was fundamentally to give political lessons with moral content and narrate the events of his time or the past for the use and benefit of the succeeding generations. Besides, the chronicler desired to satisfy the curiosity of the reader about these contemporary events in the general framework of what Nancy Partner has called "serious

[70] Edward Coleman "Lombard City Annals and the Social and Cultural History of Northern Italy," in *Chronicling History: Chroniclers and Historians in Medieval and Renaissance Italy*, eds. Sharon Dale, Alison Williams Lewin, and Duane J. Osheim (Philedelphia: Pennsylvania State University, 2007), 1-27.

entertainment."[71] This intention of the medieval chronicler to give moral lessons and edify his reader was certainly the priority of the chroniclers of Lancastrian period, such as Walsingham and Elmham, as indicated in the previous section of this chapter.

When we look at the nature of late medieval English historical-writing, it can be observed that there was an increase in the number of the works written in the vernacular. English was replacing the predominance of Latin in narrative sources and becoming more and more popular as was evident in the Middle English chronicles such as the *Brut* and the *London Chronicles*. This was probably related to the decline of the old monastic tradition of historical writing. However, on the other hand, the monks continued to produce Latin histories in the monasteries in spite of the loss of their hegemony as history writers exemplified by Thomas Walsingham and Thomas Elmham.

Although it is possible to talk about the crystallisation of the factional interests in fifteenth - century English politics, this does not necessarily mean that the quality of preserving the records or transmission of the contemporary reportage of the events declined. The historical productions were still important as firm and stable devices of telling the contemporary events. They relied principally upon eye-witness accounts or narratives based upon the documents and oral evidence as one of the most essential form of narration in the Middle Ages. Moreover, with the help of rhetoric, the main aim of these writings was to convince the reader of the truth that the author believed on the base of those eyewitness accounts and documents.[72]

These aspects of historical writing, outlined here briefly, determined the content and form of the works produced. The sources selected here for research, are

[71] Antonia Gransden, *Historical Writing,* 454 -79.
[72] *Ibid.,* 459 -79.

mainly the chronicles which are not mere records of events but also communicate the different perspectives of the authors, relating to both internal and external events. These sorts of sources depict how they might be compatible or incompatible with each other according to the perspective and the social environment in which he took place. Moreover, the selected sources include the royal biographies of Henry V, which were written principally to eulogize the king, some monastic chronicles particularly constructing a coherent view of English past, and the local writing of London chroniclers.

So, our sources have a variety in terms of their form such as chronicle, annals or biography. Besides, they might be classified as the works produced by secular or monastic sources. Finally, they can be described as local, city or monastic productions according to their social backgrounds. These sources heavily relate to contemporary events. For this reason, they provide us with the facility to interpret the historiographical mentality of the authors by looking at how they reconstructed the narrative of own time according to their selection of the sources, their personal motivations, social environment and relations.

I.6. Main Themes of the Thesis

The essential argument of this thesis will be that the chronicles produced during the Lancastrian dynasty cannot be considered as Lancastrian propaganda. This is a major challenge to existing historical scholarship on the historiography of Lancastiran period. As I have indicated above, propaganda is a very tricky concept for a comprehensive classification of the historical writing produced throughout the reign of the Lancastrian kings. Given this, first of all, this thesis will argue that the Lancastrians did not have a propaganda machine to disseminate information or

manipulate chronicles to legitimise the usurpation of Henry IV, or to establish domestic harmony and unity in support of Henry V's external campaign against the French, and the policies of Henry VI, particularly during his majority - the minority of Henry VI, as I will discuss in Chapter 6, is a bit different because under the directorship of Henry VI's regent, Bedford, the Lancastrians tried to use some propaganda instruments to enforce the image of Henry VI as the king of both England and France, but this is not seen in the chronicles.

On the other hand, this thesis will show that the principal chroniclers of the period were not historians commissioned by the Lancastrian kings. They were quite independent from the manipulation of the Lancastrians. Besides, their audience was not the wider public but a limited number of people, mostly their friends, relatives and fellows. The limited circulation of the chronicles is one important proof of this. Moreover, the term propaganda to describe these sources is clumsy and useless. It is true that as M.T. Clanchy has discussed in his seminal work, *From Memory to Written Record 1066-1307*, that the growth of literacy went along with the "production and retention of the records on an unprecedented scale"[73] in the later middle ages. The chroniclers, in this process, functioned in multi-dimensional way. On the one hand, they were believed to be the transmitter of the accurate information. In most cases, as I will discuss below, they were used for seeking for true knowledge. On the other hand, the increase in the recording of the facts in the later middle ages influenced the writing style of the chroniclers. They could have ready access to the documentary evidence as I will show by looking at the texts such as *Chronica Maiora* of Thomas Walsingham and the *Gesta Henrici Quinti*. Therefore, they reflected the recorded information. But, this does not mean that the

[73] M.T. Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record, England: 1066-1307* (Chichester: Blackwell, 2013), 1.

chroniclers delibaretely wanted to reflect the official point of view. The chroniclers, as Clanchy indicated, dealt with "the matter rather than the manner of presentation."[74] In this sense, their main purpose was to record the events as they happened in Rankean terms. Then, it can be claimed that they were actually making the media representation of the events consciously or consciously. My discussion throughout the thesis will also obviously present this fact. Additionally, as Chris Given-Wilson mentioned for the late medieval English chronicles, propagandistic piece must be short and the author of the text should give his message in a direct and explicit language.[75] However, the chronicles of the period were too long and full of detail to be considered propaganda texts.

These are the formal reasons why the chronicles of Lancastrian period cannot be regarded as propaganda. Throughout the main body of the thesis, by analysing the content of the chronicles along with their formal construction, I will also try to display by analysing some themes that they were not propaganda texts to serve the legitimisation of the Lancastrian dynasty. Since, these chronicles had anti-Ricardian sentiments, they have been readily regarded as Lancastrian propaganda texts. It is true that in some cases, they showed Lancastrian inclinations. But, this does not mean that they were written for propaganda, rather, in many cases, they included entries implying the criticism of Lancastrian rule. Lastly, this thesis will show that the main intention of the chroniclers was the recording of the contemporary events. This does not mean that they did not have a political, historical and social consciousness. They were, after all, well-educated men and they were also influenced by the politico-religious and intellectual atmosphere around them. Furthermore, certain facts like their patronage, their relations with the king, and their

[74] *Ibid*., 102.
[75] Given-Wilson, *Chronicles*, 206.

own personal interests and ideas, determined the content of their works. But, as medieval chroniclers, their motivation for writing was essentially the continuation of a writing tradition coming from the past as well as moral and edifying purposes.

As for the organisation of the chapters of the thesis, in the second chapter, I touch upon the dynastic problems of the Lancastrians. Since, Henry IV became the king of England by usurpation, the problem of the hereditary right of the Lancastrians was a very significant issue, especially in the early years of his rule. For this reason, the chroniclers gave considerable place to the problem of his succession. This chapter will contribute to the historiography of the Middle Ages in the sense that it will become the first attempt to evaluate the accounts in the chronicles about this issue as a whole from a historiographical point of view. It will show the divergent approaches of the chronicles to the succession problem.

The third chapter, like the second chapter, will be a case study. It will interrogate the well-established conviction that the entries in the chronicles about the "common consent" of the estates to Bolingbroke's accession to the throne represent Lancastrian propaganda. Rather, their sole purpose was to record a propagandistic event arranged by the Lancastrians.

The fourth and the fifth chapters will be interrelated. They will be about the principle of "common good" in the chronicles. As is well-known, the principle of "common good" was the backbone of just kingship throughout the Middle Ages. The Lancastrians, used the idea that Richard II violated the rights of his subjects and did not observe the principle of "common good." The chronicles are also full of entries related to this issue. However, the fourth chapter will show how the anti-Ricardian discourse and criticism about the principle of the "common good" in the chronicles

also turned into a criticism of Lancastrian kingship beginning just after the accession of Henry IV.

In the fifth chapter, it will be argued that, even if there was no explicit criticism of Henry V's policies in terms of the "common good," there were some indications of it in the chronicles. Besides, it will be shown how the principle of "common good" started to be articulated against the kingship of Henry VI especially in the 1450s and this found its reflections in the relatively new concept of the "common weal."

The sixth chapter will deal with the formal representation of the Lancastiran kings in the chronicles. Therefore, three cases, to which the chronicles denote a lot of attention such as the coronations of Lancastrian kings and and the royal entries of Henry V in 1415 and Henry VI in 1432, will be discussed. This chapter will show that the ceremonies were propaganda events in themselves and were carefully managed by the Lancastrians but the intention of the chronicles was merely to record these events.

The conclusions reached in each chapter are closely related to each other. As a whole, the analysis of the evidence in the chronicles will be made by reading them in the historical context in which they were written. In this sense, this study offers a re-contextualisaton of the historical writing produced during the Lancastrian period. Moreover, this thesis will contribute to a better understanding of the general characteristics of historical writing of the period by attempting to rescue it from near oblivion. Thus, this thesis, will hopefully help to fill a great gap in the field of the historiography of Lancastrian rule, in particular, and in the discussion of late medieval historical writing in general.

CHAPTER II

HISTORIOGRAPHY, LEGITIMACY AND THE SUCCESSION PROBLEM

II.1 Introduction

The Lancastrian argument that the Lancastrian kings were actually the true heirs to the English throne was the least persuasive of several instruments used to legitimise the dynasty. In this sense, the claim by descent constituted the Achilles' heel of the Lancastrian kings and became an important problem for the Lancastrians throughout their reigns. It occupied a prominent place not only in the documentary sources but also in the historical writing. Therefore, the purpose of this chapter is primarily to seek for and define the role of historiography in the ongoing practical political and legal debates about the succession problem. The essential questions will be such: did the historiography during the Lancastrian period merely reflect the debates on the succession problem, or was it entirely important as a legitimisation tool for Lancastrian regime? Do the chronicles actually represent a kind of Lancastrian propaganda? How should we read the divergent accounts on the Lancastrian claim by descent in the chronicles? In the light of these questions, this chapter argues that the chronicles of the period did not have a consistent line of argumentation on the issue of the Lancastrian claim by descent. They had divergent representations free of the Lancastrian influence.

The Lancastrian argument on the problem of succession should be regarded as reflections of a legitimacy crisis in the exclusive and particular conditions of early fifteenth century-English history. As is well-known, Henry Bolingbroke - later Henry IV - seized power relatively easily and promptly just after his landing at Ravenspur in early July, 1399, without any serious military or popular resistance. Richard II was forced to abdicate his throne in favour of his cousin and was formally deposed on 30 September 1399. This was not the first instance of "constitutional" deposition in English history. Edward II had been previously deprived of his throne in 1327, but the Lancastrian usurpation stimulated "much more contemporary interest"[76] than the deposition of Edward II since the conventional succession rule of primogeniture was broken.[77] The crisis of legitimacy for Lancastrian power was not solely confined to the early Lancastrian historiography. It further found ramifications in the later representations in both literary and historical sources. In the second part of his famous play *Henry IV*, Shakespeare displays this view by means of a conversation between Henry IV and his son Henry Monmouth, later Henry V, while on his death-bed:

> By What by-paths, and indirect crook'd ways,
> I had this crown: and I myself know well
> How troublesome it sat upon my head.[78]

Shakespeare wrote this part of the play through Tudor eyes sometime between 1596 and 1599 during the period of the Elizabethan dynastic crisis. While, it is highly unlikely that this conservation is historically accurate, even if it had been devised in the context of Tudor dynastic problems, it is of importance since it reflects the

[76] Given-Wilson, *Chronicles*, 198.
[77] Although there are several and different contemporary narrative sources about the deposition of Edward II, their "contradictions" with each other and "incomplete pictures" have made the certain account of this event very difficult. This has lead the continuing current debate up to the recent decades about whether this was a legal deposition or just an abdication though majority of the historians consider it a legal deposition today. For a comprehensive discussion look Claire Valente, "The Deposition and Abdication of Edward II", *English Historical Review 453* (1998), 852-881.
[78] William Shakespeare, *King Henry IV, Part 2*, ed. A.R. Humphreys (London: Methuen, 1987), 154.

probable unease and concern of the Lancastrian kings for their legitimate rulership even just before the accession of Henry V. Furthermore, another example can be offered from Edward Hall's chronicle from sixteenth century. Hall was a Tudor historian and his work was a source for Shakespeare's historical plays. According to Hall, even at the very date of his coronation, Bolingbroke's kingly title was still publicly contentious:

> ...who so euer reioysed at this coronacion…, suer it is that Edmund Mortimer erle of Marche whiche was heire to Lionell duke of Clarence, the third begotten sonne of kynge Edwarde the third as you before haue heard, and Richard erle of Cambrige the sonne to Edmond duke of Yorke, whiche had maried Anne sister to the sonne Edmonde, wer with these doynges neither pleased nor contente.[79]

For Hall, this discontent would foreshadow the destructive divisions and persecutions between the two factions of the War of the Roses, the Lancastrians and Yorkists. But, he did interestingly write that Henry took "vupon hym the crowne and scepter royall without title or lawfull clayme but by extorte power and iniurious intrusion..."[80] Another Tudor historian John Stow's attitude was somewhat different from that of Hall. According to Stow, Bolingbroke "was ordained king of England, more by force then by lawful succession or election."[81] This obviously marked for Stow the illegitimate and unlawful handover of political power. Tudor historians' assumptions were surely fabricated in order to justify their own regime and dynasty and were based on the negation of the previous Lancastarian and Yorkist dynasties. The varying degree of vehemence in their rejection of the previous century's

[79] Edward Hall, *Hall's Chronicle: Containing the History of England, During the Reign of Henry the Fourth, and the Suceeding Monarchs, to the End of the Reign of Henry the Eight, in which one particularly described the manners and customs of those periods. Carefully Collated with the editions of 1548 and 1550.* (London: 1809), 13. The Third Earl of March, Edmund, was the husband of Philippa, the daughter of Edward III. In the succession crises throıughout the reigns of Richard II and the Lancastrians, his son Roger and his grandson Edmund would always be possible candidates to the throne.
[80] *Ibid*., 13.
[81] John Stow, *A Summarie of the Chronicles of England. Diligently Collected, Abridged & Continued* (London:1598), 159.

political developments was just a matter of sympathy and preference for one of these sides.

The subject matter of this chapter is not how and why the Tudor historians focused on the Lancastrian usurpation but they do show that the issue was still the source of attention in the following century because the Tudor historiography tended to present Tudor accession, in Hall's words, as the beginning of a relief and effective government, which paved the way for the "triumphant reigne of king Henry the viii."[82] Moreover, despite the fact that they should be taken into consideration very cautiously, these accounts themselves do partly reflect earlier debates in historical sources since they heavily drew upon fifteenth century narratives as sources for their own histories. Although the legitimacy of Lancastrian political power was not by common consent accepted as lawful at the theoretical level in the first days of Lancastrian regime, it did not remain a subject of public debate for long. Except for some claims about the illegitimacy of Lancastrian kingship during dangerous rebellions of the Percies and Archbishop Scrope in 1403 and 1405 respectively, it was not a matter of concern to many during the reign of Henry IV. Moreover, when power was consolidated in the hands of Henry V's strong centralised government, the question of legitimacy was not a serious and practically suitable argument against the Lancastrian regime.[83]

However, the theoretical weakness of dynastic power change would turn into an obvious public political debate following the Yorkist victory against Henry VI at the battle of Northampton on 10 July 1460. On 10 October, just three days after the opening of the Parliament, Richard,the duke of York, came to the Westminster and

[82] Hall, *Hall's Chronicle*, 505. For Tudor historiography, see F.J. Levy, *Tudor Historical Writing* (San Marino: Huntington Library, 1967).
[83] Ralph A. Griffiths, "The Sense of Dynasty in the Reign of Henry VI" in Ralph A. Griffiths, King *and Country: England and Wales in the Fifteenth Century* (London: The Hambledon Press, 1991), 83-103.

claimed the throne of England. When he entered into the Parliament chamber, he was "challenged by Archbishop Bourgchier as to whether he wished to see Henry or not, he replied haughtily that there was no one in the land with whom he should seek an interview."[84]

For Richard, the right to be the heir to the throne was a matter of inheritance. For this reason, he presented a document in this parliament to prove that he was the rightful heir to the Crown by right of inheritance from Edward III through Philippa, the daughter of Lionel of Clarence, the second son of Edward. When the judges were asked to approve the Yorkist claim, they replied in the same parliament that the matter was so great "and touched the kyngs high estate and regalie, which is above the lawe and passed ther lernyng" and demanded an excuse "of any avyce and counseill."[85] The majority of the Lords objected to the claim of Richard on the basis of "the grete othes the which they have made" to Henry VI, and "that the lordes may not breke thoo othes." For the Lords, "there is to leyde ageyn the said title, dyvers entayles made to the heires males as the corone of England, as it may appere by dyvers cronicles and parlementes."[86]

The lords and judges were unambiguously drawing attention to the fact that they had all sworn oaths of allegiance to the sovereign king Henry VI and they could not break their legal oath by the weak claim of the Duke of York because their allegiance was in the general framework of legal action.[87] Moreover, they asserted the righteousness of Henry VI's title with reference to the various chronicles and former parliamentary rolls. In parallel with the first objection of the lords and judges

[84] Griffiths, *The Reign of Henry VI*, 867. Michael Bennett, "Edward III's Entail and the Succession to the Crown, 1376-1471," *English Historical Review 113* (1998), 580-609.
[85] *The Parliament Rolls of Medieval England* , eds. Chris Given-Wilson (General Editor), P.Brand, A. Curry, R.E. Horrox, G. Martin, W.M. Ormrod, J.R.S. Philipps (London: National Archives, Scholarly Digital Editions), 2005.
[86] *Ibid.*
[87] Bennett, "Edward III's Entail, "580-609.

in the Parliament, the legality of Henry VI's sovereignty would be articulated from the mouth of Henry VI in *John Blacman's Memoir*, which was penned in a later date about 1480. According to Blacman, when Henry VI was accused of claiming and possessing the crown of England unjustly for a long time during his imprisonment in the Tower, he would answer as such:

> My father was king of England, and peacefully possessed the crown of England, for the whole time of his reign. And his father and my grandfather was king of the same realm. And, I, a child in the cradle, was peaceably and without any protest crowned and approved as king by the whole realm, and wore the crown of England some forty years, and each and all of my lords did me royal homage and plighted me their faith, as was also done to my predecessors.[88]

Thus, as it can be clearly understood what Blacman attributed to Henry VI and the opposition of the lords and the judges to the Duke of York, the Lancastrian kingship especially claimed to base its legitimate rule on the acceptance and approval of the whole estates of the realm as well as possession. But, the second objection was open-ended and not clear. Nearly all historical narratives discussed the power-change after 1399. Their arguments sometimes displayed differences from each other. So, the main subject of this chapter will be to determine what were the arguments articulated in the various chronicles, mentioned above as the second reason for the objection of the lords and the judges against the Yorkist hereditary claims?[89] What kind of legal justifications for the Lancastrian regime were developed and how were they described in the historical writing? Did the arguments in these various chronicles overlap each other? These questions require attention.

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[88] It should be emphasised that John Blackman held important posts at Eton College in 1450s, which had been founded by Henry VI. He was later a Carthusian monk. John Blacman, *Henry the Sixth, A Reprint of John Blacman's Memoir*, ed. with Translations and Notes by M.R. Jones (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1919), 44.

[89] Bennett, "Edward III's Entail," 580-609.

II.2 The Importance of the Lancastrian Claim by Descent

Before the discussion of evidence in the chronicles, it is important to mention the significance of the Lancastrian usurpation in medieval English history in terms of hereditary right. As stated above, the Lancastrian attempts to justify the power change naturally started with the deposition of Richard II. Henry's usurpation was theoretically and practically unprecedented. It was a power change "in disregard for the traditional principle of primogeniture."[90] In this sense, it attracted much more attention than had the deposition of Edward II in contemporary historical writing. There were most probably two essential reasons for this in the minds of the chroniclers: they all knew that it was, on the one hand, a radical departure from the former and traditional practices; on the other hand, it would be decisive for the secure and peaceful continuation of the Lancastrian regime.[91]

If we put aside the more indirect and informal instruments to establish a legitimation for the usurpation of the kingly power such as "political prophecies, divine intervention or marriages", there were essentially four determinative rights on which the medieval English kings legitimised their rule: these were essentially hereditary right, conquest, election and designation.[92] Among these, the hereditary right was the most convincing and powerful form of legitimation. Since monarchy was "of its essence, a hereditary institution"[93] and the "hereditary right determined the choice of successor," it was the most sensible way of succession on the theoretical level. However, there could be, of course, doubts as to what 'hereditary' meant.

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[90] Edward Powell, "Lancastrian England), 457-477.
[91] Given-Wilson, *Chronicles*, 198.
[92] Chris Given-Wilson, "Legitimation, Designation and Succession to the Throne in Fourteenth-Century England" in *Building Legitimacy: Political Discourses and Forms of Legitimation in Medieval Societies*, eds. Isabel Alfonso, Hugh Kennedy and Julio Escalona (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 89-107, Designation is one notion which should be indicated in talking about Royal Inheritance.
[93] Vernon Bogdanor, *The Monarchy and the Constitution* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 42.

Designation was another notion which requires attention when assessing royal inheritance. It was important in its precedents in such cases as the claim that Edward the Confessor had designated William I as heir to the throne "by a lawful donation"[94] and later that William I designated his second son William Rufus as his heir.[95] For this reason, on the practical level, the determinant factor was not actually any sort of certainly fixed rule of succession but the "power, veiled or naked, of the usurpers' adherents that prevailed."[96] Therefore, as we will discuss in the fourth chapter of the thesis, the so-called unjust rule and tyranny of Richard, in a sense, the "unorthodox kingship"[97] of Richard II, gave the Lancastrian party sufficient practical reasons for the deposition. However, the accusations brought against Richard did not theoretically provide Bolingbroke with proper justification and legitimation for his usurpation.

For this reason, Bolingbroke and his retinue knew very well that they had to find a definite solution to this legitimacy problem due to the fact that Lancastrian usurpation should be legitimised by the way of Inheritance. In this sense, to find a proper solution to the succession crisis was of great importance as much as the practical necessity of distributing of political and economic power among the Lancastrian adherents of Bolingbroke.

However, it must be indicated that the question of the hereditary succession and its rules were not clearly answered at this time. In some respects, the crown did not necessarily follow the the rules of ordinary property, even if ordinary inheritance was becoming more regular by the reign of Henry III. There were obviously several

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[94] *The Gesta Guillelmi of William of Poiteirs*, eds. R.H.C Davis and Marjorie Chibnall (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 20.
[95] Charity Leah Urbanski, *Protest and Apology: Writing History for Henry II of England* (Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of California, 2007), 72.
[96] Hicks, *English Political Culture*, 40.
[97] The notion of 'Unorthodox kingship' of Richard will be discussed in the fourth chapter.

previous examples of succession crises in different forms in English history such as Henry I's desire to give the right of succession to his daughter Matilda or the emerging conflict between King John and Arthur of Brittany, grandson of Henry II through his son Geoffrey after the death of Richard I.[98]

As for the Lancastrian case, the situation was somewhat different. Bolingbroke was not the natural male heir to the throne after Richard II.[99] Richard had come to the throne after his grandfather Edward III in 1377 according to the conventional principle of primogeniture. He was the son of Edward the Black Prince, the eldest son of Edward III, who had predeceased his father unexpectedly in 1376. Edward III had five sons: they were Edward the Black Prince, Lionel of Clarence, John of Gaunt, Edmund of Langley and Thomas Woodstock, respectively. Richard had no son to be heir after his deposition. Bolingbroke was the son of John of Gaunt, the third son of Edward III. The problematic nature of succession crisis thus derived essentially from the precedence and uniqueness of the deposition. Briefly, it was not the first instance of deposition but it was the first to break the well-established tradition of succession through the unwritten custom of the succession of the eldest sons, in other words, primogeniture.

From 1199 when King John came to the throne until 1399, there had been no debate about who should come to the throne – except during the civil war period in 1215-17. The normal and conventional procedure was the hereditary right of the eldest son or the son of the eldest son to the throne. Undisputed successors had

[98] For a brief summary and discussion of Arthur's case see W.L. Warren, *King John* (Baltimore: John Hopskins Press, 1949), 1-17. Given-Wilson, "Legitimation, Designation and Succession," 89-107

[99] This was another problem for Bolingbroke because the English Crown rested traditionally upon entail in male line. The only precedent through female line was the succession of Henry II after his mother Matilda, the daughter of Henry I. Michael Bennett has published an unknown document in which Edward III tried to arrange the succession upon entail in male line just before his death but this was ignored in the following period, even under the reign of Richard II. Bennett, "Edward III's Entail, "580-609.

always been enthroned. Even when Edward II was deposed, there was no discussion about the sucession because his son Edward III was alive. However, one should not assume that the rule of primogeniture in respect of the crown was fixed in a detailed sense. In this respect, the Lancastrian usurpation, by violating the principle of primogeniture, would pave the way for the untraditional successions of Edward IV, Richard III and Henry VII during the fifteenth century.[100] I will make the analysis the divergent representations of the chronicles on the succession problem below.

II.3 Walsingham's Changing Attitude to the Succession Problem

This succession problem found its reflections in the historical writing in different forms. The course of the events of the Lancastrian usurpation was elaborately recorded and narrated in a wide range of sources from English chronicles to some French accounts. Apart from the simple chronological narratives of the events, different historiographical representations were employed in the historical writing to illustrate how the handover of royal power had occured. This was apparent after the so-called "Lancastrian Revolution."[101]

It is hardly possible to find Lancastrian propagandistic ideas about the hereditary right of Henry IV in the Continuation of *Eulogium Historiarum*, Adam Usk's chronicle and other chronicle accounts written in the traditon of the *Brut*.

[100] Powell, "Lancastrian England," 457- 77.

[101] Several historians have still, not infrequently, used the notion of "Lancastrian Revolution" in their works. This historiographical tradition has essentially come from nineteenth-century Whig historian William Stubb's assertion that "Henry IV came to the throne as the champion of constitutional government and his parliamentary title ensured the triumph of the Legislature." William Stubbs, *The Constitutional* History *of England Vol: I* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1891), 325. However, it should be indicated that the usage of so-called "Lancastrian Revolution" has shifted from unique constitutional and parliamentary change into a change in the distribution of political power among the higher and lesser- nobility. For example, Douglas Biggs says that "the Revolution of 1399 was not a revolution in terms of constitutional development as William Stubbs saw it, but was a revolution" of the House of Lancaster with the "royal retainers" close to John of Gaunt and Henry IV for decades before 1399. Douglas Biggs, "An ill and Infirm King: Henry IV, Health, and the Gloucester Parliament of 1407" in *The Reign of Henry IV: Rebellion and Survival 1403-1413*, eds. Gwilym Dodd and Douglas Biggs (York: York Medieval Press, 2008), 180-210.

Among those chroniclers, Thomas Walsingham might be expected to discuss on the hereditary right of Bolingbroke in detail since he was certainly the most important and prolific historian of the period. Furthermore, he has generally been considered by the majority of modern historians as the staunchest supporter of Lancastrian claim to the throne.[102] But, from the evidence in his writings, it can be seen that this modern scholarly reading is highly controversial.

The evidence in Walsingham's chronicle, especially for the Lancastrian reign from 1399 to 1422, does not closely deal with the succession problem. The references in this part of his chronicle to the hereditary right of Bolingbroke are simply a record of the documents or events. They do not contain any propagandistic comments on the hereditary right of Bolingbroke. However, the earlier writings on the 1370s do include some critical and hostile entries, which are related to Bolingbroke's father, John of Gaunt and his Lancastrian claim to the throne. More importantly, these cannot be found in the other chronicles of the time. In this respect, the following part will be about the analysis of the facts in Walsingham's chronicle and I will try to relate the changing attitude in Walsingham's works to the Lancastrian dynastic claims.

In his main history, the *Chronica Maiora,* Walsingham gives much space to the accusations brought against Richard in the *Record and Process*. But, he does not attempt to justify the hereditary right of Bolingbroke to the throne. His accounts after Bolingbroke's ascension tell almost nothing about the succession problem. In his narrative on the year of the Lancastrian usurpation, Walsingham merely quotes the Latin and Middle English versions of the claim made by Bolingbroke on September

[102] This view is still dominant in historiography. For illustration see Gransden, *Historical Writing*, *Vol: II*, 141. And for an attempt to revise it, see John Taylor "Richard II in the Chronicles," in *Richard II: The Art of Kingship*, eds. Anthony Goodman and James L.Gillespie (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 15-36.

30, 1399 at the meeting of the Parliament. It is the exact copy of the claim in the Lancastrian official account of Richard's abdication, the *Record and Process* documents, inserted into the *Parliament Rolls*, later. This is widely known and reads as follows:

> In the name of God, Amen, I, Henry of Lancaster, lay claim to this kingdom, with its crown and all other parts belonging to it. I make this claim through the royal blood which comes down to me from King Henry and through the just cause which God of his grace has sent me for recovering the kingdom with the help of my kinsmen and friends. The kingdom was on the point of destruction, owing to the failure of its government and the violation of its laws.[103]

Walsingham is obviously silent about the hereditary succession except for Bolingbroke's statement about his royal blood traced back to Henry III. The lack of any concrete discussion and any attempt to legitimise Bolingbroke's claim by descent in Walsingham's histories appear to be a very conscious narrative strategy when the inter-consistency of Walsingham's histories is taken into consideration. Moreover, this is in contrast to his earlier accounts of the succession debate brought into the agenda by John of Gaunt, the father of Bolingbroke, at the Good Parliament just before the death of Edward III. According to Walsingham's account, when his two elder brothers had died and Edward III's health had worsened, Gaunt, Edward's third son, had brought the issue of who would become the king of England after his father's death.

How Walsingham narrates this process and the events in his chronicle will be discussed below. Before the analysis of his early accounts, it should be pointed out that, although Walsingham tells us at length about the form of the deposition and resignation of Richard II before passing onto the claim of Bolingbroke to the throne

[103] *The Chronica Maiora of Thomas Walsingham 1376-1422*, trans. David Preest with Introduction and Notes by James G. Clark (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press), 311. The Middle English version of this claim is available in the Parliament Rolls. *The Parliament Rolls*, Given-Wilson (General Editor). 2005.

in his narrative, in this part of his histories, he demonstrates that he knew actually very well that the usurpation of Bolingbroke was a serious matter and the deposition had to be appropriated into the legal framework. For this reason, he stated that the estates of the realm wanted to make an examination about "what is valid or what is necessary with respect to the foregoing" issue of the sentence of deposition and "have appointed their proctors, collectively and severally, for the purpose of resigning and returning to the king the homage and oaths of loyalty previously made to him."[104] Walsingham like Bolingbroke and his retinue realized that the hereditary right to the throne was the weakest but most important side of the Lancastrian claim. Therefore, he consciously avoided venturing into a discussion of this issue in his history, even though there were explicit discussions of succession to the throne by hereditary right in his earlier accounts.

For this reason, for a proper and concrete analysis of Walsingham's view about the succession problem, his earlier writings should be analysed. His entries for the 1370s present valuable material to understand his attitude to the Lancastrian claim. The material included in Walsingham's historiography comes especially from the period of crisis in English politics toward the end of Edward III's reign. In this sense, it is necessary to remember that Walsingham did not begin to write his chronicles after the Lancastrian coup d'etat. As indicated in the Introduction above, he was a monk at St.Albans. He definitely followed the tradition of history writing at St.Albans, especially the *Chronica Maiora* of Matthew Paris as a model for his historical writing. Like Matthew Paris, who wrote a contemporary narrative for the years between 1235-1259 and who was especially motivated to narrate the baronial opposition, Walsingham started to write his histories as a response to the increasing

[104] *Chronica Maiora,* 10.

political tension around in 1376 with the Good Parliament and the accession of Richard II to the throne.[105] The contemporary account in one of his manuscripts for the years of 1376 and 1377, commonly titled as "Scandalous Chronicle," by the modern scholars because of his very pejorative and aggressive comments on John Gaunt, was deliberately omitted from the text in later recensions. This point is quite interesting because in this original part of his chronicle, Walsingham shows that he was aware of the Lancastrian claims to the throne during the last years of Edward III and he had a highly negative attitude towards John Gaunt, father of Bolingbroke, particularly due to Gaunt's sympathy and support for anti-clerical Wycliffite ideas.

Walsingham had made the recension from "Scandalous Chronicle" and rehabilitated Gaunt in his *Chronica Maiora* and the *St. Albans Chronicle* during the 1390s, when the majority of the nobility and clergy had turned against Richard II and Gaunt had turned against the Lollards. Furthermore, he omitted and revised the parts about Gaunt before giving a copy of his history to the younger brother of Gaunt, Thomas Woodstock, who was "a collector of manuscripts."[106] These may be two reasons why Walsingham softened his representation of Gaunt in the later versions of the chronicle although he displayed a highly prejudiced and hostile attitude to John of Gaunt in the original text.

Given these, it is now necessary to look at what Walsingham writes about the succession problem, which can be traced back to the last years of Edward III. According to Walsingham, when "Edward the Black Prince died," the sudden death of the Black Prince caused anguish among the knights because of the ambitious character of Gaunt, who was the third son of Edward III. This quite negative description of Gaunt springs, as mentioned before, essentially from Gaunt's

[105] *The St.Albans Chronicle: The Chronica Maiora of Thomas Walsingham Volume I 1376-1394*, eds. John Taylor, Wendy R. Childs and Leslie Watkiss (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2003), xvi, xlix
[106] *Ibid.,* lix.

protection of the Lollard knights, who had close relations with him. Besides, John of Gaunt was unpopular because of his ambitions for the throne and troubled relationships, particularly with the Londoners.[107] But, Walsingham's striking account of Gaunt's plans and request from the assembly of the knights in the middle of the debates of the Good Parliament in 1376 is elucidatory for a better understanding of the origins of later Lancastrian claims to the throne and his view about the Lancastrian claim by the descent.

The main agenda of the Good Parliament was to find a proper solution "to the discontent generated by the mis-management of the war with France" and to reform the Royal government.[108] But, it also witnessed, for Walsingham, Gaunt's elevation of the succession issue. According to Walsingham, Gaunt "entered into the meeting of the knights and insistently asked them" in the midst of the Good Parliament "who would inherit the kingdom of England after the death of the king (Edward III) and of the prince of his son (the Black Prince)." He demanded further that, "they would statute a law following the French example that no woman would be the heir to the kingdom; for he considered the old age of the king, whose death was imminent." This would not exclude Richard II but would exclude the heirs of the Duke of Clarence, who was second son of Edward III. For Walsingham, Gaunt did not stop easily at this point. Additionally, with regard to "the youth of the Black Prince's son (Richard)," he emphasized the inability of Richard and thought to poison him "if he could not gain the kingdom in any other way." He knew that if "these two were removed and such a law was accepted in the Common Parliament, he would be

[107] Anthony Goodman has written a comprehensive monograph on John Gaunt. In his study, he makes a detailed analysis of the problems between the Gaunt and Londoners as well as the discussion of John Gaunt's connections to the Lollards. *John of Gaunt, The Exercise of Princely Power in Fourteenth-Century Europe* (Harlow: Longman, 1992), see especially 59-61 and 241-43.

[108] J.S. Roskell, *Parliament and Politics in Late Medieval England*, Vol: II (London: The Hambledon Press, 1981), 1-2. For the Good Parliament also look G.A. Holmes, *The Good Parliament* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975).

nearest heir to the kingdom." As we can understand very well from what Walsingham told, these were publicly known. For Walsingham, it had been publicly and certainly known that "Lord Edmund Mortimer, the third Earl of March was married to the daughter of Lionel, his elder brother to whom because of his wife, the hereditary right of the rule was available, if the only son of Prince Edward (Richard) would depart without an heir."[109]

As Michael Bennett has emphasized, "the session what became known as the 'Good Parliament'" was very controversial because of "its assault on the court and the government."[110] In the midst of the debates of the 'Good Parliament', Gaunt wished to take advantage of the situation since his elder brother was already dead and his father was sick. However, the council answered Gaunt that "it was in vain to strive for such things" since the king "can live longer than everybody." Further, they argued that they had the right heir (Richard) to the throne even if the king died. So, it was unnecessary to strive about such a business. Against the powerful argument articulated in the council, John Gaunt "being confused remained silent."[111] In general, according to Walsingham's account, Gaunt had a great ambition and desire to be a regent to Richard, who would be king after his grandfather's death. On the

[109] Thomas Walsingham, *Chronicon Angliae 1328-1388*, trans. E.M. Thompson (London: Longman, Rolls Series, 1874), 92-93. Murtuo, ut duximus, domino Edwardo principe, cum adhuc parliamentum duraret, creuit desperatio militibus de comitatibus, tumor et superbia (duci et) malefactoribus. Interim dux concionem intrans militum, constanter petiit ab eisdem, ut, adhuc durante parliamento, in quo rengi negatio tractabantur, ipsi milites et domini atque barones eis associati deliberarent, quis regnum Angliae, post mortem regis et fiili principis hereditare deberet. Petiit insuper ut exemplo Francorum legem statuerent, ne femina fieret heres rengi; consideravit enim senectutem regis, cujus mors erat in januis (et) juventem fiili principis, quem, ut dicebatur, impotionare cogibat, si aliter ad regnum pervenire non posset, quoniam hi duo si de medio tollerantur, et hujusmodi lex in communi parliamento sanciretur, ipse futurus esset proximus heres regni. Nam nullus masculus supererat proximior eo regno. Haec eo tempore in ore omnium volvebantur. Quippe dominus Edmondus Mortimer, Comes Marcihie duxerat filiam domini Lionelli fratris sui, qui erat senior eo; as quem, ratione uxuris suae, spectabat jus regni hereditarium, si unicus filius principis sine herede discederet.

[110] Bennett, "Edward III's Entail," 580-609.

[111] Walsingham, *Chronicon*, 93. Inito ergo concilio, responsum est ei; supervacuum esse circa talia laborare cum alia graviora adhuc in manibus haberentur, quae tractatu ampliori indigebant, "et praecipue," aiunt, "cum dominus noster rex sanus adhuc et in "colimis praeter senectutem, diutius possit vivere quam "nos omnes. Et dato quod (dominus) rex discederet, "adhuc nos non caremus herede, vivente filio domini nostri principis jam decenni. Quibus viventibus non est opus nobis circa hujusmodi negotia laborare." His auditis siluit dux confusus.

other hand, he might have wanted to secure the Lancastrian line after Richard as heir to the throne if Richard died without children. This seems much more credible because Gaunt demanded with reference to Salic law in France that a law should be enacted to eliminate the heirs from the female line. This alleged attitude of Gaunt actually demonstrates us that he was far-sighted because the problem of an heir coming through the female line would threaten the Lancastrian hereditary legitimacy after 1399.

In the light of the existing accounts related to the problem of succession in Walsingham's works, how should we evaluate the changing attitude of Walsingham from opposition to Gaunt's discussion of the succession problem, to the silence about Bolingbroke's so-called hereditary right? In fact, the change in his approach can be explained very smoothly. At first, as discussed above, Walsingham had prejudices against Gaunt until 1390s when a great opposition against the Ricardian regime among the Lords emerged in England because of Richard's arbitrary rule. In this sense, the account of Walsingham about Gaunt's ambitious claim in the Good Parliament should be approached very cautiously. It is true that Walsingham, as is evident in several cases, was well-informed about the political events in London through many eye-witnesses, who lived in London and visited St.Albans. For the Good Parliament, he got his information specifically from Thomas Hoo, a knight of the shire of Bedfordshire in the Good Parliament and whose family had connections with St.Albans.[112] However, the fact that there is no reference to the succession problem in another most important chronicle of the late Edwardian and early

[112] This is confirmed by Walsingham himself. In a marginal note in Bodley MS 316, he writes that Hoo "reported to me under oath the story I am telling you." "Qui etiam iureiurendo mihi retulit hoc quod narro." Cited in Christopher Guyol, "The Altered Perspective of Thomas Walsingham's Symbol of Normandy," in *Law, Governance and Justice: New Views on Medieval Constitutionalism*, ed. Richard W. Kaeuper (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 206. Additionally, Hoo's wife was the relative of Thomas de la Mare, who was the abbot of St.Albans at that time.

Ricardian period, the *Anonimalle Chronicle*, which covers the period from Brutus to 1381 and the eye-witness account of the Good Parliament, forces us to reconsider the reliability of Walsingham's account.[113]

Secondly, the changing attitude in Walsingham's chronicle toward the Lancastrians became very explicit in the 1390s under the influence of the changing political situation. What I have described above as the rehabilitation of John Gaunt in Walsingham's chronicle was based on firm grounds due to the fact that Walsingham was certainly dissatisfied with Ricardian rule. As some writers have rightly indicated "as Gaunt's star rose in Walsingham's account, so that of Richard waned."[114] Thirdly, it should be noted that Walsingham's changing attitude to the succession problem cannot be fully explained merely by his own thoughts and motivations. He was a member of a religious community and not entirely free from the influence of his abbots. It is known that the abbot John Moot had close ties with the opponents of the Ricardian regime. Later, the abbots of the St.Albans would become the allies of the Lancastrian kings.[115] For this reason, even though there is no direct evidence that the abbots decided what Walsingham should write, considering the fact that Walsingham revised his major history *Chronica Maiora* after 1399 and what we have today in our hands are the surviving manuscripts re-written around the 1420s, we can possibly explain the non-existence of Walsingham's comments on the succession problem.[116]

In summary, these three factors most probably became determinant on the changing attitude of Walsingham from his criticism of Gaunt's discussion of the

[113] Gransden, *Historical Writing*, 111. *The St.Albans Chronicle: I*, eds. Taylor, Childs and Watkiss., Ixxiii.
[114] *Ibid.,* xcvii.
[115] Nigel Saul points out that the two successive abbots of St. Albans, Thomas de la Mare and John Moot were very closely connected to the Appellants, particularly ThomasWoodstock, the Duke of Gloucester and the fifth son of Edward III, who was murdered by the men of Richard II in 1397. See Saul's work *Richard II* (New Haven:Yale University Press,1999), 372.
[116] Taylor, "Richard II," 15-36.

succession problem in the Good Parliament to the silence on Bolingbroke's hereditary claim in his narrative in the early fifteenth century. Given the brief analysis of this historiographical output, Walsingham's silence and subtracting of the implications of the hereditary right of the Earl of March from his earlier account seems to be a substantive narrative strategy in the framework of this legal and theoretical sensitivity under the influence of his abbots, who had close connections to the Lancastrian government. However, although Walsingham omitted those implications from the later versions of his histories, his already-mentioned reference to the commissioners and proctors demonstrates that he must certainly have known of Bolingbroke's attempt to justify his claim by descent legally to eliminate the doubts about his usurpation. Further, it can be argued that the omission of any defence of Bolingbroke's hereditary right in Walsingham's chronicles may itself be evidence for the independence of Walsingham from possible Lancastrian propaganda.

II.4 The Mortimer Claim and the "Crouchback Legend" in the *Eulogium* and Usk's Chronicle

Up to this point, I have discussed how the entries on the succession problem in Walsingham's works exhibit that they were not the tools of Lancastrian propaganda to legitimise the claim by the descent of the Lancastrians. Now, I will consider an important aspect of the Lancastrian dynastic problem. As it will be remembered, one of the most striking points in the "Scandalous Chronicle" of Walsingham is that it gives place to the claim of the Earl of March to the English throne.[117] On the other

[117] The change of attitude in Walsingham's chronicle is also evident in how he wrote about the Earl of March after the Lancastrian usurpation. Walsingham does not give any reference to the Mortimer claim and writes that the young Edmund Mortimer changed his side and became the ally of Welsh rebel Owain Glyn Dwr "because of weariness at his dreadful captivity, or through fear of death or for

hand, the Lancastrians had fabricated the story of the "Crouchback legend" to counter the Mortimer claim. The reflection of these issues in the chronicle of Adam Usk and the *Eulogium* requires attention and will be discussed below to determine whether the chroniclers wrote independently from any kind of Lancastrian influence.

It is obvious that the great threat to the Lancastrian cause was the possible claim which might come from Edmund Mortimer, the third Earl of March. Edmund was the husband of Philippa, daughter of the second surviving son of Edward III, Lionel of Clarence. If the primogeniture principle was considered, then their son Roger would be the rightful heir to the throne even if it came through female line. There was one notable and memorable precedent for the righteousness of this claim: Edward III had himself claimed the French throne through his mother's line. This had been enforced with the statute of 1351 that "the law of the crown of England, is, and always hath been such, that, the children of the kings of England, in whatsoever parts they be born in England or elsewhere, be able and ought to bear the Inheritance after the death of their Ancestors."[118]

It is very clear that after the discussions in the Good Parliament and the death of Edward III, "the accession of Richard II in 1377 brought neither political stability nor a resolution of the problem of succession."[119] The situation was not still very clear when Richard came to the age of 18 in 1385. Richard did not have a son. Besides, the tense relationships between Richard and his uncle gave stimulus for Richard's doubts about Lancastrian intentions for the throne. In this historical context, the *Westminster Chronicle*, which covers the period between 1381-1394, pointed out that if Richard "died without children the Crown would pass by

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some other reason unknown, and acknowledged that he had joined Owain in hostility towards the king of England." *The St.Albans Chronicle, II*, 337-339.

[118] *The Statutes of the Realm, Vol: I 1101-1307*

[119] Bennett, "Edward III's Entail," 594.

hereditary right to the Mortimers."[120] In a much cited quotation, the *Eulogium Historiarum* confirmed this widespread conviction. According to the anonymous writer of that chronicle, Richard named the fourth earl of March as his heir in the Parliament of 1385. For the author, "in the same parliament, in the common audience of all lords and the community, the king had the earl of March proclaimed as the nearest heir to the crown after himself publicly. Indeed, the Earl was killed in Ireland after a short time."[121]

Although the *Eulogium* was composed of different entries added into the text by various writers at different times, its claim was important in two senses for this chapter: firstly, it has been generally regarded by the modern scholars as a Lancastrian chronicle even though several criticisms of the Lancastrian dynasty can be detected in it, as it will be shown in Chapter 4. A large bulk of the work was composed during the first quarter of the fifteenth century. Due to its presumed Lancastrian point of view, its depiction of Richard's unorthodox and allegedly unlawful kingship have always been regarded as grounds for later descriptions in the secondary literature about the so-called absolutist regime and tyranny of Richard II. Secondly, the entry about the appointment of the Earl of March as heir by Richard belongs possibly to a date *after* 1398, the death of the fourth Earl of March,[122] and the father of Roger just one year before the Lancastrian usurpation. In this sense, this evidence supports the overall argument of this chapter: the existence of the Mortimer

[120] *The Westminster Chronicle, 1381-1394*, eds. L.C. Hector and B.F. Harvey (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982), 192- 195.
[121] *Eulogium Historiarum,* 361. In eodem etiam parliamento in communi audentia omnium dominorum et communitatis Rex comitem Marchiae haeredem fore proximum ad coronam Amgliae post ipsum publice fecerat proclamari. Qui quidem comes modico tempore post in Hibernia interemptus fuit." Several historians disregard this entry in the *Eulogium* as a mistaken account about the Parliament meeting. For example, Anthony Tuck, *Richard II and the English Nobility* (London: Edward Arnold, 1973), 205-207. But, given the fact, there is a document of male entail coming from the time of Edward III published by Bennett and the existence of similar evidence in the *Westminster Chronicle* makes this entry sensible.
[122] Given-Wilson, "Legitimation, Designation and Succession," 93.

Claim in the *Eulogium*, which was written and compiled mostly under the Lancastrian reign, includes an anti-Lancastrian entry. Therefore, considering this evidence, it is difficult to say that the compilers of the *Eulogium* aimed at the articulation of the Lancastrian propaganda of the claim by the descent. On the other hand, in terms of the essential argument of the whole thesis, it puts forward the fact that the Lancastrians did not make a systematic and deliberate control of written sources.

The chronicle of Adam Usk does not have any direct reference to the Mortimer claim, but it contains an eye-witness account of the resolution of the legality of the process of Bolingbroke's usurpation and confirms Walsingham's allusion to the commission of lawyers. However, there are divergences, when compared in detail, between Walsingham's and Usk's treatment of the hereditary claim of Henry IV.[123] In this respect, Adam Usk's account becomes the most explanatory and illuminating evidence to understand fully what the Lancastrian claim by descent was and how this was represented in contemporary historiography since his chronicle is the only one containing the full account of the legal dispute about the Lancastrian claim by descent.

It should be underlined that Adam Usk was not a typically Lancastrian historian. He wrote his chronicle under the patronage of the Earl of March and Arundel, who opposed the Ricardian regime especially during its last years.[124] For this reason, his harsh criticism of the Ricardian period has led to a misperception. His chronicle has been conventionally considered in the category of Lancastrian propagandistic histories. However, Usk's chronicle must not be treated as

[123] It is necessary to say that unlike Walsingham's chronicle, we cannot see any reference to Gaunt's claim in the Good Parliament in Usk's chronicle. At the same time, we can find nothing about the "Crouchback Legend" in Walsingham's work.

[124] Chris Given-Wilson, *Chronicles of the Revolution 1397-1400, The Reign of Richard II* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993), 6.

Lancastrian propaganda due to the fact the explicit expressions and descriptions in it do not seem to support sincerely the Lancastrian usurpation. Adam was an ecclesiastical lawyer and took a place in the advisory examining committee to discuss and verify the authenticity of Lancastrian claims for the throne. Therefore, Usk's narrative is very significant, not only due to the fact that he was an eye-witness account to the legality attempts of Bolingbroke by hereditary right but also because of his relative impartiality.

Since the Lancastrian usurpation rested upon very weak foundations particularly in terms of hereditary right, a story, which has come to be known as the "Crouchback Legend", was fabricated in due process. According to this completely devised story, Edmund Crouchback, the first earl of Lancaster was actually the elder, not the younger son of Henry III. He was older than Edward I but the Crown passed to Edward I because of Edmund's deformity: he had a crooked back. This story was not merely wrong but also extremely unacceptable in legal terms because it would make all succession since Edward I illegal and illegitimate.[125]

Furthermore, the "Crouchback Legend" was ironic because it relied on the female line. Henry IV's mother was the grand-daughter of Edmund, the Earl of Lancaster. This was in contradiction with Gaunt's advocacy of "Salic Law" and it would not help any Lancastrian attempts for legitimacy. Yet, Henry tried to have it accepted by the proctors and lawyers especially between the date before 30 September, when the deposition of Richard II was declared, and 13 October, when he was crowned as Henry IV. According to Usk, after the decision to depose Richard, a committee gathered to arrange "how and for what reasons" the deposition "might

[125] *Ibid.,* 6.

lawfully be done."[126] In this committee, there was also Usk himself. As the lawyers and experts were debating on the formalities of deposition, "it was suggested by some people" that Edmund Crouchback was "really the first-born son of King Henry the third, but this was rejected by the majority in the same committee "because of its imbecility."[127]

In the following lines of his chronicle, Usk continues to discuss this idea. He concludes, with references to previous works such as "the chronicles of friars preachers at London," that Edward I was indeed the first-born son of Henry III.[128] Considering the fact that Usk rejects the Crouchback legend, two points become conspicuous. At first, when looked at his chronicle, it can be seen that Usk does not offer any other alternative for Lancastrian legitimisation through hereditary right.[129] Usk does not comment whether Bolingbroke had the right to come to the throne by the descent. He merely says that Henry made his claim to the throne "on account of his descent through the person of King Henry the third."[130] In this sense, from the evidence above, it is explicit that although he does not reject the validity of Henry's ascension, he leaves this question open-ended. Why Usk did not completely refuse Bolingbroke's claim to the throne is quite understandable due to some well-known reasons. Usk was always an anti-Ricardian, promoted in his career with the support of Thomas Arundel, and he had an important post as lawyer under the Lancastrian regime. Additionally, he had, after all, compiled his chronicle during the reign of Lancastrian kings. With regard to these facts, it would be impossible to expect a

[126] *The Chronicle of Adam Usk 1377-1421*, ed. Chris Given-Wilson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), 62-63.
[127] *Ibid.,*64-65.
[128] *Ibid*. 65-67.
[129] *Ibid.,* Given-Wilson, "Introduction," xix.
[130] *Ibid*., 71.

recording of the direct rejection of Bolingbroke's claim to the throne in Usk chronicle.

However, a second point urges us to reconsider Usk's view about the question of descent. Two facts in his chronicle give us the impression that he had actually his own view on the succession problem. It seems that he was not simply recording the events and facts on this issue, but, he was also propounding his view implicitly. These evidences are related to the genealogy of the Earl of March: -Usk received his education in law at Oxford under the patronage of the Edmund Mortimer, the third Earl of March. Initially, it should be mentioned that unlike the records available in the *Eulogium* and the *Westminster Chronicle* about Richard's nomination of the Earl of March as his heir, Usk tells us a quite different story. He mentions the hostility of Richard to the Earl of March because of his popularity. According to Usk, when the Earl (who was Richard's lieutenant in Ireland) came back from Ireland " people welcomed him warmly and with joyful hearts, … went to meet him on his arrival, in the hope that through him they might be delivered from this king's wickedness."[131] But, Richard "remained suspicious and hostile towards him, planning to put him to death with his own hands…" Just after this account, Usk gives a very detailed genealogy of the Earl of March. Usk emphasises the fact that "the royal line of the earls of March has prospered: the aforesaid earl Roger was the son of Philippa countess of March, daughter of Lionel duke of Clarence the second born son of Edward III."[132]

In another part of his chronicle, dated 1406, which actually relates to Usk's travels in Europe, he again persistently points out that Lionel Clarence was the second son of Edward III (this also refers to the fact that Gaunt was the third son of

[131] *Ibid.,* 39.
[132] *Ibid*., 43.

Edward).[133] Although Usk does not write explicitly that the Earl of March was the true heir to the throne after Richard II, all the evidence in his chronicle, his rejection of the Crouchback Legend, his silence about the hereditary right of Bolingbroke and illustration of the March's genealogy by insistence to the fact that he was the grandson of Lionel Clarence when read together, lead us to suggest that he was perhaps thinking that the throne was the right of March. Further, this demonstrates that his purpose was not to legitimise or propagate Lancastrian claims to the throne. On the issue of hereditary right of Bolingbroke, as he did in other cases that I will discuss in the following chapters, he wrote completely independent from Lancastrian perspective.

If I return again to the problem of the Crouchback legend, it can be said that this story was publicly articulated as a potential legal solution after the Lancastrian usurpation though its authenticity was firmly rejected by the examining committee of the experts. But, it was no doubt known and debated previously. The *Eulogium* also demonstrates that though the Crouchback legend was part of a Lancastrian legal and political strategy during the deposition process, it was originally John Gaunt's deliberate weapon against the other possible options before the usurpation. This entry in the *Eulogium* certainly belongs to a date after the Lancastrian usurpation because several parts of the chronicle were written after Bolingbroke's usurpation "from a series of component sources."[134] But, it refers to a high politics debate in the Parliament of 1394 or 1397:

> In this Parliament, the duke of Lancaster asked that his son Henry would be proclaimed the heir of kingdom of England. He was contradicted by the Earl of March, who asserted that he was descended from Lord Lionel, second son of King Edward. On the

[133] *Ibid.,* 211.
[134] This is a controversial issue. For a summary of recent debates on this, see George Stow, "The Continuation of the *Eulogium Historiarum*: Some Revisionist Perspectives," *English Historical Review 482* (2004), 667-681.

> contrary, the duke said that the king Henry III had two sons: Edmund, the elder and first-born and Edward. However, Edmund had his back broken. On account of this, he decided himself to be unworthy of the crown. Wherefore their father united them together in such a way that Edward would rule and after him the heirs of Edmund; and gave Edmund, the earldom of Lancaster, and from him, descended his son Henry, by right of his mother, who was the daughter of afore-mentioned Edmund. The earl responded to him saying that Edward was the first-born and Edmund was the most elegant man and noble knight as it is contained unequivocally in the chronicles. However, the king imposed silence on them.[135]

This entry in the *Eulogium* marked a former date from the other already indicated passage about the hereditary right of the Earl of March. Even if there is no evidence from the *Parliament Rolls* about whether this debate happened in front of Richard II, it suggests again that despite the controversy and obscurity about Richard's appointment of the Earl as his heir, a kind of public consciousness existed about Bolingbroke's illegitimate claim by the descent after the usurpation. Precisely, *Eulogium*'s accounts cannot easily be regarded as completely reliable because of its internal chronological and factual contradictions.[136] However, when it is recalled that Usk was an eye-witness lawyer participating in the debates on this hereditary right issue, Usk's rejection of the "Crouchback Legend" can be assuredly accepted as evidence for the illegitimacy of the Lancastrian kingship claim by descent. What is more to the point, when these different accounts in three distinct contexts in the *Eulogium*, Walsingham's and Usk's chronicles have been evaluated together, a definite crisis of legitimacy and legality in historiography becomes more apparent.

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[135] *Eulogium Historiarum*, 369-70. In hoc parliamento dux Lancastriae petiit quod filius suus Henricus judicaretur haeres regni Angliae; cui contradixit comes Marcihiae asserens se descendisee a domino Leonello, secundo filio Edwardi Regis. Econtrario dux dicebat quod Rex Henricus Tertius habuit duos (filios), Edmundum seniorem et primogenitum, et Edwardum. Qui tamen Edmundus dorsum habuit fractum, et propter hoc judicavit seipsum indignum esse ad coronam; quare pater eorum eos sic componere fecit, quod Edwardus regnaret, et post eum haeredes Edmundi, et dedit Edmundo comitatum Lancastriae; et ab eo descendit Henricus filius ejus jure matris, quae fuit filia dicti Edmundi. Cui respondit comes, dicens, hoc non esse verum, " Sed Edwardus fuit primogenitus, et Edmundus vir elegantissimus et nobilis miles, prout in chronicis patenter contineturi." Rex imposuit eis silentium.

[136] Given-Wilson, "Legitimation," 93-94.

In summary, the evidence in the historiographical literature from Walsingham's chronicle to the *Eulogium* certainly demonstrates once again that the Lancastrian claim to the throne was not a creation *ex nihilo*. There was an obvious succession crisis and a lively legal and theoretical debate since the last years of Edward III. This debate more specifically nurtured the ongoing rivalry between the Lancastrian family and Richard II during the latter's reign. Moreover, it found its concrete reflection in the historiography before the usurpation. Contemporary historiography was a part of this legal and politico-theoretical discussion. Thus, all these historiographical ramifications become revealing for the legal and political consciousness of the historians or chroniclers.

II.5 Bolingbroke, the Succession Problem and the Chronicles

After the discussion of the entries in the chronicles, it is crucial at this point to ask whether Henry IV really wanted to have control over the writings of the chroniclers about the claim by descent. It should firstly be noted that Bolingbroke's attempt to find a theoretical cover for the deposition was a systematic and conscious legitimisation project from the very beginning of the usurpation. The speech that he delivered in parliament of 30 September, which has already been touched upon above, refers to his hereditary right coming from Henry III as well as the implications of the conquest and divine intervention. It seems that the reference in his speech to the male line through Henry III was a powerful argument. Besides, undoubtedly, as a usurper, Bolingbroke would normally wish the acceptance of his claim by the hereditary right and to secure the continuation of Lancastrian dynasty

and to counter the possible threat of the Mortimers. For this reason, he enacted a statute entailing the Crown on his sons and their heirs male in 1406.[137]

In general terms, the Lancastrian hereditary claim had its origins in the previous three decades when his father John Gaunt had voiced the problem of the legal hereditary succession very loudly in the last years of Edward III and during the reign of Richard II. In this sense, Bolingbroke's rationality drew upon his father's traditional claims. What Henry did differently from his father was to apply to the chroniclers when he came to the throne and try to find historical evidence from earlier chronicles. According to an entry written by Walsingham, Bolingbroke sent letters for the investigation of these historical evidences:

> Other than that the letters were sent to all the abbots of the kingdom, and its major churches (instructing that) the prelates of the afore-mentioned churches would scrutinize all the chronicles looking upon the state and the government of England from the time of William of the Conqueror up to the present time and they would send certain persons instructed in the chronicles, who carried with such chronicles along with them, under the common seals of the said places, and who knew to give competent answers and teach on the above-mentioned chronicles. And these letters were sent by/under the name of King Richard under his private seal.[138]

Henry's search for historical evidence was quite reasonable and a traditional way of reaching information employed by the previous English kings. For instance, Edward II had ordered a search of the chronicles to gain information about the people who had been sent to exile in the past, and Edward III had requested the chronicle of William of Newburgh from the abbey of Notley in order to consult it for

[137] Bennett, "Edward III's Entail," 580-609.

[138] "Annales Ricardi Secundi et Henrici Quarti, Regum Angliae" in *Chronica Monasterii S.Albani: Johannis de Trokelowe et Henrici de Blaneforde* (London: Longman, 1866), 252. Litterae praeterae missae sunt ad omnes Abbathias regni, et majores ecclesias, ut praelati dictarum ecclesiarum perscrutari facerent cunctas Chronicas regni Angliae statum tangentes, et gubernationem, a tempore Willelmi Conquaestoris usque ad tempores praesens; et ut mitterent certas personas instructus in Chronicis, secum ferentes hujusmodi Chronicas, sub sigillis communibus dictorum locorum, qui scirent respondere competenter, et docere, de Chronicis supradictis. Et hae quidem apices missae fuerunt sub nomine Regis Ricardi, et Privato Sigillo suo. Usk also confirms this point. He writes that in the council of the doctors, they looked at the histories of England. *Usk*, 65-67.

some unknown reasons.[139] In this sense, such historical evidence would provide the Lancastrian kingship with the most reliable legitimisation tools. Nevertheless, as discussed above with references to the evidence in the chronicles of the Lancastrian period, while Henry was looking for accurate documentation from the past to support and legitimise his claims, he did not manage to influence the contemporary chroniclers, who have been traditionally considered Lancastrian propaganda.

II.6 Resurgence of an Old Problem

As mentioned before, the unlawful usurpation of the Lancastrians had not come to appear explicitly in the historical writing after the process of rebellions and revolts, which particularly troubled the Lancastrian dynasty until 1406. The succession issue did not seem to be a serious and weighty problem during the reign of Henry V and would not be so in the historical writing at least until the later years of Henry VI. The essential English chronicles for the reign of Henry V, such as *Gesta Henrici Quinti* and *Liber Metricus de Henrico Quinto* were royal biographies. Their main intention was to praise Henry V's deeds and to support external policy against the French enemy. As for the case of the reign of Henry VI, it should be stressed that the chronicle literature for the years between 1422-1461 is relatively poor and not sufficiently illuminating to outline properly the attitudes of the historians on this issue. Although Henry VI was a very weak king after 1440s and "despite popular ferment" and civil disorder, the landed classes did not seriously think "to remove the divinely head of the body politic" by means of another alternative to the Lancastrian dynasty. Therefore, until 1461 Henry VI was not "seriously challenged" for his

[139] Given- Wilson, *Chronicles*, 73-74.

title.[140] This may be a revealing reason for the silence of English historiography throughout the reign of Henry VI.

Before the years in which the dynastic succession became a sharp and divisive problem with the Yorkist rising against the Lancastrian authority in the 1450s, the past history of the succession discussion was raked up by another foreign historiographical source. This was Walter Bower's *Scotichronicon*. Bower was a Scot and the Abbot of Inchcolm. He wrote his work between the years of 1440-1447 as a continuation of John Fordun's *Chronica Gentis Scotorum*. Bower has displayed in his accounts an anti-Lancastrian and pro-Ricardian attitude and wrote that the deposition of Richard was "the conspiracy of the three Henries," Henry Bolingbroke, Henry Percy and his son.[141] Bower rewakened the Mortimer's claim to throne and indicated that

> This Henry of Lancaster, the duke of Hereford and the Earl of Derby, when he took on the crown of the kingdom, in fact, sent to the abbot of Glastonbury for the acts of Parlaiment and for the chronicles, which claim that the daughters of Roger Mortimer, should succeed, and since the abbot denied with an excuse, he recognised the temporality until he obtained the chronicle, and he burned it and ordered the new chronicles to be fabricated that were in his favour.[142]

[140] John Watts, *Henry VI and the Politics of Kingship* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1999), 264.
[141] Cited in Walsingham, *Chronica Maiora*, 308. In fact, Bower includes in his chronicle some comments criticising Richard II. For example, he gives the sack of the Scottish Abbeys at his campaign in Scotland in 1385 as the cause of his deposition by God's disfavour. Cited from Anthony Goodman, "Anglo- Scottish Relations in the Later Fourteenth Century: Alienation or Acculturation?" in *England and Scotland in the Fourteenth Century: New Perspectives*, eds. Andy King and Michale Penman (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2007), 236- 253. But, his account is essentially anti-Lancastrian. The reason for this might be the influence of the French anti-Lancastrian historiography of the fifteenth century on Bower's historical writing.
[142] Cited in Antonia Gransden," The Date and Autorship of John of Glastonbury's Cronica sive Antiquitates Glastoniensis Ecclesie," in her *Legends, Traditions and History in Medieval England* (London: The Hambledon Press, 1992), 295. Iste Henricus Lancastrie dux Herfordie et comes de Darby quando sibi regni diadema de facto assumpsit misit abbati de Glasynbiri pro actis parliamenti et cronica que posuerunt filias Rogeri de Mortuomari debere succedere, et quia excusando negavit, recognovit temporalitatem donec cronicam optinuit et incendit ac novas pro se facientes fabricare jussit. As Chris Given- Wilson has indicated, it is really very hard to determine whether Bower got this information from a reliable source or it was simply a fabrication. See Wilson, *Chronicles*, 72.

Antonia Gransden has asserted that this story is consistent with "the Lancastrians' propagandist use of chronicles in their attempt to prove that Bolingbroke had a hereditary right to the throne."[143] However, she does not give any evidence about which chronicles were employed for Lancastrian propaganda. As I have discussed so far, the so-called Lancastrian chronicles did not show any particular or intentional propagandistic attempt to legitimise the Lancastrian claim by descent. Conversely, they contained divergent approaches to the problem. But, Bower's account shows us another fact: it displays that Mortimer's claim had been still known to some extent by historians before 1450s. This point is quite interesting because March's claim cannot be found in the chronicle sources and the documentary evidence of the period after the deposition of Richard II.

Earlier on, Richard, the Duke of York had been considered to be one of potential heirs after Henry. York was the grandson of Edmund Langley, the fourth son of Edward III. But, his claim by descent might come from another more powerful source. He was also the grandson of Lionel of Clarence, the second son of Edward III, through his mother Anne Mortimer's line. In the 1450s, when the Duke of York was nominated as the protector as well as the fact that Henry VI was childless, and the two surviving sons of Henry IV, Bedford and Humphrey, had died respectively in 1435 and 1445, several genealogies were produced to show York's descent from Lionel of Clarence.[144]

But, his claim would explicitly come to light when the delicate health of the king detoriorated and the Commons demanded the protectorate of the Duke of York having an active and effectual position in the political establishment.[145] Thus York would reach the position of a rival claimant in the midst of the political turmoil and

[143] *Ibid*., 295.
[144] Griffiths, "The Sense of Dynasty," 83-101.
[145] Griffiths, *Reign of King Henry VI*, 753.

discontent and become a serious threat to the Lancastrian dynastic establishment. We can regard this as the return of the Mortimer claim since the Yorkist claim depended on Edmund Mortimer's already-known claim to the English throne.[146] In the October Parliament of 1460, York presented a detailed genealogical description of the righteousness of his claim to the throne and indicated that he himself, "as sonne to Anne, daughter to Roger Morytmer erle of Marche" was the rightful and lawful claimant to the throne "afore any issue of the said John Gaunt, the fourth goten son of the same Kyng Edward." When the Parliament rejected his claim, he asserted very explicitly in the same parliament that Henry IV's justifications for coming to the throne "was oonly to shadowe and colour fraudelently his said unrightwise and violent usurpacion, and by that moyen to abuse disceyvably the people stondyng aboute hym."[147]

II.7 The Succession Problem in the Chronicles of Later Lancastrian Period

The explicit utterance of the Mortimer/March claim in the Parliament and its presentation in a detailed genealogical depiction found far-reaching repurcussions in two historiographical works of the period when the issue became at that moment a subject of public discussion. These were the anoymous *English Chronicle* and John Hardyng's chronicle.[148] John Hardyng was not a very reliable writer. In his earlier life, he had very close connections with the Percies, who rebelled against Henry IV in 1403. But, he served the Lancastrians later throughout the rest of his life. He wrote

[146] Strohm calls this the Return of the Yorkist Repressed. See his *England's Empty Throne* for the discussion of all aspects of Lancastrian legitimacy problem.
[147] *Parliament Rolls*, Wilson (General Editor), 2005.
[148] In the entries of the *London Chronicles* belonging to the 1450s, it is possible to detect the expressions for the Duke of York as Richard Plantagenet, which implies that he had the right to the throne. For example, see *A Chronicle of London: From 1089 to 1483* (Felinfach: Llanerch Publishers,1995), 136-137.; and William Gregory's Chronicle of London, in *The Historical Collections of A Citizen of London in the Fifteenth Century*, ed. James Gairdner (London: Johnson Reprint Company Limited, 1876), 189. Possibly, they were motivated by the discontent about the Lancastrian government.

the extant version of his chronicle around 1460 from a Yorkist point of view when he changed his allegieance from the Lancastrians to the Yorkists and passed away without completing his chronicle.[149] Writing about sixty years after the Lancastrian usurpation, the Mortimer claim and the debate on the above-mentioned "Crouchback Legend" resurfaced with new vigour in his work.

Hardyng indicated that there was a great discussion and controversy about who was the elder son of Henry III since the last years of Richard II. Some "haue alleged" that John Gaunt forged an "untrewe cronycle" in order "to make his sonne kynge, whan he sawe he myghte not be chose for heyre appuraunt to kynge Richarde." Like Walsingham's and Bower's accounts, Hardyng underlined that when Henry IV deposed Richard, "all the cronycles of Westminstre and of all other notable monasteries were hade in the counsell at Westmynstre." Upon the examination of these chronicles, as it can be detected in Usk's testimony above, the examiners certainly determined King Edward as the elder and Edmund, the Earl of Lancaster as the younger brother.

Thus, chronicle forgery of Bolingbroke had been "adnulled and reproued." Although Bolingbroke persisted in his claim by descent, the lords in the parliament replied that "the erle of Marche, Roger Mortymere, wase his next heire to the croun, of full discent of blode, and they wolde have noone other."[150] Hardyng's chronicle has been generally regarded as a complicated source. However, though he wrote about sixty years after Walsingham and Usk and had a Yorkist point of view, Hardyng's account show some parallels with these chroniclers and Bower's entry. There is continuity in the historiography concerning the problematic succession of

[149] Alastair J. MacDonald, "John Hardyng, Northumbrian Identity and the Scots" in *North-East England in the Later Middle Ages*, eds. Christian D. Liddy and Richard H. Britnell (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2005), 29-45.
[150] *The Chronicle of John Hardyng*, 353-354.

Henry IV, irrespective of whether they were written through Lancastrian or Yorkist point of view. Besides, if Hardyng's close affiliation with the Percies is considered, since they challenged the royal title of Bolingbroke in 1403, it becomes understandable why he brought forward again the issue that Gaunt and Bolingbroke had fabricated forged chronicle and that was rejected in the parliament.

Similarly, the second part of the anonymous *An English Chronicle*, which was part of the tradition of *Brut* chronicles, was written from Yorkist perspective and the writer gives us a lengthy discussion between the Yorkist faction and the supporters of Henry VI in the parliament. As the editor of the chronicle pointed out, the extensive employment of the *Parliament Rolls* displays not only the pure and complete Yorkist inclinations but also the chronicler's purpose to convince the reader by relying on the documentary evidence.[151] At this point, what is important within the limits of this chapter is how the chronicler revived the Mortimer claim in the form of Yorkist argumentation and narrated in the work. For the chronicler, Henry VI had perpetrated several wrong deeds against Duke Richard,"and was displeased and diseased of hys right enheritaunce of the reaume and croune of Englond, by vyolent intrusyonne of Kyng Harry iiijth." Bolingbroke deposed Richard II "vnryghtfully, wrongfully, and tyrannously." But, the Duke Richard demanded from the parliament on the basis of "hys syde clayme, title and pedegre" to "haue be crouned" as "ryght heyre by lyneall descens from the sayde Kyng Richard."[152]

Thus the writer of the anonymous *An English Chronicle* moved to another phase of discussion. He says that Henry IV "vsurped the crowne."[153] This distinguishes the content of his account from the former accounts and that of Hardyng. The depiction of the controversies in the earlier historiography did not

[151] Marx, ed., *English Chronicle*, cii.
[152] *Ibid*., 92.
[153] *Ibid*., 92.

tackle the succession crisis in the form of a Lancastrian illegitimate usurpation. They conscientiously avoided any connotation of this. Therefore, they did not use any word like usurpation in their accounts. By intentional employment of the word "usurpation" and with reference to the tyrannous and unrightful deposition of Richard, the anonymous writer does not seem only to accomplish Yorkist point of view but sucessfuly depicts the Lancastrian succession crisis in a new discourse. He defines Henry IV as a usurper and asserts the Duke of York as the rightful heir to the crown after Richard II. This derives from the fact that the situation of 1460-61 made such frank discussion of Yorkist claim possible.[154]

The hereditary right entries in the historical writing of the period may be regarded as significant element of the political and legal ideas on kingship and legitimacy, which were debated in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries and they shaped the minds of the chroniclers. The historiographical narratives demonstrate that they did not present a consistent line on the question of legitimate inheritance and its importance. The accounts on this question were not unified and homogenous and they were not part of an effective Lancastrian propaganda. They were distinct from each other in their narratives according to the motivations and patronage behind them. This was in contrast to the unity and precision of the chronicle accounts in some of their arguments about the failure of Ricardian kingship, which I will explain particularly in the fourth chapter. Thus they did not actually serve for the Lancastrians to fill the void deriving from legally unlawful deposition of Richard II.

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[154] The only counter-argument against the Yorkist claim can be detected not in a chronicle of the period but in the polemical political writings of John Fortescue (1394- 1480), who was a judge and supporter of the Lancastrians against the Yorkists. Then, after the Yorks came to the throne, he got a royal pardon and rejected his anti-Yorkist writings. He would write that Edward III entailed the Crowne to his heires malis" and his daughters renounced publicly all the rights to the English throne. Sir John Fortescue, *The Governance of England*, ed. C. Plummer (London: Clarendon Press, 1885), 354. For the discussion of Fortescue's importance in the period see Bennett, " Edward III's Entail," 580-609.

On the other hand, there was in general a need for the Lancastrian regime to legitimise its usurpation through the claim by the descent. As Walsingham, Usk and Hardyng indicated, Henry Bolingbroke had wished to find some evidence in previous chronicles for this purpose. But, he failed in his intention. Besides, there is no evidence to support the view that the Lancastrians wanted systematically to manipulate and control the entries on the issue of succession problem in the chronicles.

CHAPTER III

RECONSIDERING THE FABRICATION OF THE COMMON CONSENT

III.1 Introduction

The historiographical elusiveness and uncertainty that I have discussed until now, have confirmed the prevalent public opinion in the last years of Richard II and the early years of Henry IV that "there was little inclination to define the succession in the manner in which the house of Lancaster may have liked."[155] It was readily apparent for the chroniclers that Henry IV's hereditary claim was quite dubious. He was neither a designated heir to the throne nor did his claim descend properly and clearly from the male line. Nonetheless, the varying attitudes of the chronicles, as discussed in the previous chapter, about the succession problem differed were to a certain extent from how they approached the assertion that Henry IV had came to the throne by the common consent of the whole estates of the realm. They commonly did agree that Bolingbroke did not acquire his kingship by forced usurpation. Conversely, they considered his ascension as an ordinary and legitimate event which had happened through election by the authority of the estates.

In this respect, in this chapter, I would like to explain why the chroniclers did not display any disagreement with each other and show no doubts about this claim and I will try to answer to the question: does this general conviction make all

[155] Bennett, "Edward III's Entail," 599.

historiographical works of the period Lancastrian propagandistic texts for the legitimisation of new regime? In this chapter, I will suggest that the evidence about the common consent in the chronicles was not part of Lancastrian propaganda. The main purpose of the chronicles, employing extensively the documentary sources, was just to record and narrate the event of how Bolingbroke came to the throne.

III.2 Fabrication of the Consent and Propaganda

"Fabrication of Consent" for the legitimation of the Lancastrian dynasty occupied the minds of nineteenth and twentieth- century historians, Many of whom were parliamentary or constitutional historians. From Stubbs to Lapsley, historians discussed whether Bolingbroke's accession to the throne was a consequence of parliamentary sovereignty or whether it happened by the authority of the whole estates.[156] The problem was a purely modern one and debated within the limits of the paradigms of constitutional history. The main agenda was to highlight some constitutional elements in the chronicles, as they saw them. Factual evidence obtained from the historical writing was being used to verify their modern scholarly debates.

On the other hand, Paul Strohm, in a more recent historiographical article based primarily on literary sources as well as the chronicles of the period, claims that the idea of election by the representatives of the estates became a widespread conviction at the time of Bolingbroke's coronation. For Strohm, the idea of election

[156] For example, William Stubbs claimed that Henry IV became the king of England by taking constitutional approval of the parliament. "He made the validity of a parliamentary title indispensable to royalty." Stubbs, *The Constitutional* History*, 5*33. On the other hand, Lapsley wrote that Henry rejected this due to "its constitutional implications" and "he was elected by authority, not of the estates and others who had been invited to be present on 30 September, the day of Richard's deposition." B. Wilkinson criticized the arguments of both historians: "a parliamentary title was outside the practical possibilities offered to a successful rebel by the constitution of 1399." See Gaillard Lapsley, "The Parliamentary Title of Henry IV," *English Historical Review 49* (1934), 423-449. B.Wilkinson, "The Deposition of Richard II and the Accession of Henry IV", *English Historical Review 54* (1939), 215-239.

gained much currency not only among Bolingbroke's close circle but among also those outside his retinue.[157] This idea is not plausible because there is no evidence for such a claim. In addition, it should be indicated that the close circle and retinue hardly concern any of the chroniclers and to be outside of those does not imply being anti-Lancastrian.

There were no chroniclers who explicitly identified themselves outside the Lancastrian circle or as anti-Lancastrian in that period. In this sense, "Lancastrian circle" is a vogue term to explain the attitudes of the chroniclers. Even if there were such chronicles, there could not have been any valid reason for those chroniclers to attempt to display that the Lancastrian claim by common consent was right. Moreover, Strohm refutes himself in the following pages of his article. He asserts that the idea of election by the estates in the narrative sources was a part of Lancastrian propaganda machine. It was deliberately inserted into the Lancastrian texts along with other Lancastrian argument such as hereditary right and divine judgement for the textualisation of Henry's claim to the throne just after the coronation.[158]

What leads Strohm to such a deduction seems to be not only the existing accounts in the historiography but the influence of literary sources like John Gower's "Address of John Gower to Henry IV." Strohm seems to prefer to read the chronicle accounts in the light of literary sources and exaggerates the function and role of literary and historiographical representations, in terms of both what they actually wanted to express and their influences on the shaping of the ideas in the society

[157] Paul Strohm, "Saving the Appearances: Chaucer's *Purse* and the Fabrication of the Lancastrian Claim," in *Chaucer's England: Literature in Historical Context* ed. Barbara, A. Hanawalt. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1992), 21-40.

[158] *Ibid.,* 21-40. This is where the real problem- what Strohm is saying- lies. Was there really a "Lancastrian propaganda machine? This problem has already been discussed in the Introduction chapter of the thesis.

during the Lancastrian reign, in order to base his argumentations on the contemporary sources of the period. Gower compiled his poem around 1402 under the patronage of Henry IV and wrote eulogistically that "Thi title is knowe uppon thin ancestrie, / The londes folk hath ek thy right affermed; / So stant thi regne of God and man confermed."[159]

Neither does Gower's poem contain any explicit connotation to Henry IV's election by common consent nor does it refer to the parliamentary title of Henry. In contrast to how Strohm reads Gower's poem as an evidence of common consent for Henry IV's accession to the throne, it can be asserted that Gower actually writes pretty vaguely. The first part of his stanza says no more than that Henry IV was of royal descent, without committing itself to much more. The second part suggests some sort of popular consent or affirmation but without specific emphasis. In the following parts of the poem, Gower says that "God hath the chose in comfort of ous alle." But, God's choice may actually refer to Henry's military success. In this sense, such literary sources may be tricky and do not give the complete picture of what Bolingbroke aimed. Besides, the literary sources written under the certain patronage and influence of Lancastrian Court cannot be considered as a comprehensive framework for the approaches of the chroniclers, because it is hardly possible to claim that the chronicles were written under the strict control and patronage of Lancastrian regime.

[159] Thomas Wright ed., *Political Poems and Songs Relating To English History, Composed During The Period From The Accession of Edward III. To That Of Richard III*, Vol: II (London: Longman, 1861), 4.

III.3 The *Brut*, *London Chronicles*, the *Eulogium* and Consent

Nearly all the chronicles of the period commonly asserted that Henry seized control of England by the authority of the whole estates of the realm. For example, according to the anonymous writer of the *Brut* chronicle:

> ...Whanne King Richarde was deposed, and hadde resyngned his croune and his kingdom, and hym self kept fast yn holde, þan alle þe lordez of þe Reme, with þe comyns assent, chosen jis worthi lorde, Ser Henry Bolyngbroke, Erle of Derby, Duk of Herford, and Duke of Lancastere be right lyne and heritage; and for his mytful manhode tat te peple founde hym, before al oþer jei chosen hym, & made hym King of Englonde.[160]

As this passage suggests the compiler claimed that Richard abdicated the throne voluntarily. Richard misgoverned the realm and oppressed the people of his country. Consequently, Richard renounced all his kingly titles in the Tower of London.[161] The English throne was, according to the compiler, the right of Bolingbroke through descent and all the estates of the realm elected him by common consent as the King of England. The lords of the estates had the idea that Bolingbroke was not worthy alone for kingship by his right heritage but also they considered him a vigorous and capable man who deserved to be the king more than the others by conquest. In summary, it can be seen that the compiler underlines a considerable popular support for Lancastrian usurpation as well as his references to descent and conquest.

However, this entry alone does not necessarily make the *Brut* a part of Lancastrian propagandistic manipulation. The *Brut* is accepted conventionally as one of the significant contemporary authorities for the reign of Henry IV due to the fact that it gives useful details about certain issues such as the conflict between Henry and his son the Prince of Wales (later Henry V) around 1411-1412. The text of the

[160] *The Brut*. 359.
[161] *Ibid*., 359.

Brut's account of the years from 1377 to 1419 was compiled sometime between 1419 and 1450,[162] but its content has no features distinguishing it from the other contemporary sources of the time and has actually no great significance in a general sense for an understanding of Lancastrian period in comparison with the most comprehensive chronicles such as Walsingham's and Usk's.

This is not unusual because the *Brut* was compiled in annalistic form and its account of Bolingbroke's election is terse and brief. It does not make any broad discussion of the events leading to the change of royal power. It does not give a detailed description of the process by which Henry was elected and crowned. Moreover, those parts of the chronicle, compiled during the Lancastrian period, were not written under the patronage of Lancastrian kings. The chronicle had certainly no intention of serving the Lancastrian cause. One of the surviving manuscripts of the *Brut* from the fifteenth century, which was edited by Lister M. Matheson displays the essential aim of their compilers:

> And þis boke made & compiled men of religioun & oþer good clerkes tat wreten þat bifell in her tymes and made eþrof grete bokes and remembraunce to men þat comen aftir hem to heere and to see what bifell in te londe afore tyme and callid hem Cronycles.[163]

As this explanation suggests, the purpose of the compilers of the *Brut* was not to write in the service of a faction or a central authority - this is also evident when looked at the content of the work. It was compiled with the purpose of giving information to later generations about the political and social events of the period in which it was compiled. It was designed to be a national history of England from Brutus to the contemporary period. Its purpose was to "continue the original goal of making" 'great books and remembrance' for the common memory of the nation and

[162] Kingsford, *English Historical Literature*, 115-116.
[163] Lister Matheson, *The Prose Brut: The Development of A Middle English Chronicle* (Tempe: Medieval& Renaissance Text Studies, 1998), 64-65.

to establish the connection and continuity between the previous writers and their successors.[164]

A similar entry on the common consent of the whole of the estates can also be observed in Harleian MS. 565 version of the *London Chronicles*, which was edited from the manuscripts in the British Museum. According to the relevant entry, "kynge Richard resigned his dignyte in this yere of his regne xxiij; and duke Herry was be generall accorded in parlement chosyn kynge thanne, and sithen crowned."[165] In one of the other surviving manuscripts of the *Chronicles of London*, Julius B. II, there are also parallel depictions of the events during the Lancastrian usurpation. The significant difference is that it gives much more detail about the process. According to this account, Richard resigned from his crown in front of the representatives of the whole of the estates in the Tower of London and designated Bolingbroke as his successor by saying that "the Duk off Lancastre shulde be his successour, and kyng affter hym." Richard promised that he "shall have kepe and holde this Renouncyng, Resignacion, Dymssion, and levyng off ffor fferme, and stable for euermore, in alle and in every partye thereoffe."[166]

Afterwards, on the Feast of St. Jerome, on 30 September, the lords both temporal and spiritual came together for the Parliament meeting. Once Richard's renouncement and resignation had been publicly declared, and the sentences of deposition were read, Bolingbroke rose up from his place in Westminster Hall and claimed that the right of kingship belonged to him. After this challenge and claim, the lords both temporal and spiritual were asked about what they thought and "wolde say to that clayme and chalange." The representatives from "the States, with alle the

[164] Alfred Hiatt, "Historical Writing," in. *A Companion to Middle English Prose*, ed. A.S.G. Edward (Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer, 2004), 175-193.
[165] *A Chronicle of London,* 85.
[166] *Chronicles of London*, ed. Charles L. Kingsford (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1905), 22.

peple, with oute eny difficulte or tarryng, consentyd, with oon accorde, that the fforseyde Duk shulde Regne vpon hem."[167]

Kingsford indicates that the *London Chronicles* were possibly written during the reign of Henry IV "in their present shape." So, the compilers were contemporary with the events they told. Besides, the stimulus behind the contemporary detailed recording of the events might come from the shocking and traumatic nature of the whole usurpation process.[168] The surviving manuscripts from *London Chronicles* contain almost identical or similar forms and content with the *Brut* even if they described the events in much more detailed way. This is not surprising. Several portions of the *Brut* were based on the accounts of the Chronicles.

Additionally, it must be indicated that, although Kingsford thought that they were written synchronously with the events they narrated and Mary Rose-McLaren further asserted that the deposition documents of Richard II and the manuscripts of the *London Chronicles* might probably be recorded in the same place because of the same colouring and "same style of ruling pages,"[169] there is no evidence to assume the accounts of London chronicles were part of Lancastrian propaganda. Besides, in the case of the *Brut* and *London Chronicles*, we are confronted with another problem: the history of their compilation cannot be ascertained exactly due to the fact that several copies of these are lost, although both *Brut* and London *Chronicles* "survived in many portions."[170]

On the other hand, the question of whether the contemporary chronicles of the Lancastrian period were employed by the Lancastrian regime for its legitimisation raises the question of the aim of the London chroniclers: were the London

[167] I*bid*., 23.
[168] *Ibid.,* viii.
[169] McLaren, *London Chronicles*,125.
[170] Gransden, *Historical Writing,* 221-23.

chroniclers dependent on the so-called Lancastrian official discourse, if there really was such a discourse? Were the entries on the consent of the whole estates evidence of Lancastrian propaganda in the London chroniclers?[171] Firstly, it should be noted that, as is very explicit from the discussion on the succession problem in the previous chapter, the *Brut* and *London Chronicles*, having parallel accounts, did not discuss the hereditary issue apart from some quite brief entries in the reign of Richard II. These do not seem to have been inserted into the chronicles with any clear idea of political opposition to Richard or with the purpose of furthering Lancastrian propaganda. This is evident because these entries in the *Chronicles of London* are almost exact copies of the entries available in the *Eulogium* and they do not display the Lancastrian point of view even though the *London Chronicles* contain many similiarities with Lancastrian official document, the *Record and Process*. Due to these two reasons, they have not been regarded to be worthy of discussion in the preceding chapter.

However, as has been illustrated and indicated above, particularly the *London Chronicles*' manuscripts - not the *Brut* - gave much space to the usurpation process and the consent issue. If we accept Kingsford's assertion above that the detailed narrative of events relating to the Lancastrian usurpation in the Chronicles may derive from the importance of those events, such as the visit of the deputies to the Tower of London to obtain the resignation of Richard II from the throne to the approval of the estates for the accession of Bolingbroke, for the real politics of the time, it is possible to reach some revealing consequences about why all the surviving manuscripts emphasised the common consent of the whole of the estates. This is in fact concerned with the selection by the chroniclers from the sources available to

[171] The distinction between Lancastrian inclination and propaganda machine was made in the Introduction chapter.

them. It is difficult to draw a proper picture of why the *London Chronicles* were written and by which motivations they favoured "one account over another"- in this case why they dealt with the consent issue. But, it is very clear from its textual structure that there is a shift of interest by the chroniclers from "charters, rights and privileges" to the recording of the events, which were important to the Londoners.[172] Thus, unlike the entries related to earlier periods, the late fourteenth and fifteenth-century London chroniclers focused on the actual political events rather than the recording of London's city privileges and rights.

So, the chroniclers began to write with different purposes and better opportunities to have access to the sources during the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries. When we look at the development of the London chroniclers, it is well-known that London chronicles, as their name implies, are city chronicles. Their focal point is the civic history of the city and details related to the history of country have been sprinkled throughout the text as having a secondary importance. This is based on quite valid reasons and may thus explain the actual intention of the compilers of the *London Chronicles*. The compilers were mostly the lay merchants and clerks of London. The writing of the city chronicles had started by the late twelfth century with the insertion of some notes related to historical events in the charters given to the city and the lists of the prominent city officials. In this sense, they resemble the monastic annalistic writing tradition, which depended heavily on some entries and notes inserted on Easter tables.[173]

In all the surviving manuscripts, each year begins on 29 October, which was the date of the election of the new mayor. This explains the limits of personal role and authority of the chronicler in the texts. The chronicler tells the events of his own

[172] McLaren, *London Chronicles*, 15.
[173] Gransden, *Historical Writing*, 227.

period through the names of important mayors of the city. Besides, he did not identify himself as the owner of the chronicles. They were owned by all lay people of the city, particularly those who were working in the branches of various crafts and trade. For this reason, the chronicler did not identify himself as the author of the entries, but he asserted "it as his own by virtue of his citizenship of London."[174] Moreover, until the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries, when the number of the copies multiplied with the increase of vernacular writing, the *London Chronicles* actually drew upon earlier common sources such as the *Letter Books* of the City of London.

The form and compilation process of the Chronicles thus determine the content and purpose of writing. The London chroniclers wanted to record the events of their time and needed to organise the narrative in an efficient way in order to serve their purposes.[175] Therefore, as a natural consequence of this selective approach, while the plots and uprisings against the Lancastrian regime and some thematic issues of the early Lancastrian period like the consent issue took a considerable place in both the *Brut* and the *London Chronicles*, they left the vital question of the hereditary right of the Lancastrian kings out of their scope - this was surely rather difficult and dangerous to discuss. This was also surely difficult and dangerous to discuss since it might refer to the dubious hereditary title of Henry IV.

In this sense, the existence of the contemporary record of the Lancastrian usurpation in the *Brut* and the *London Chronicles* does not necessarily mean that the chroniclers wanted deliberately to emphasise the legitimacy of Lancastrian usurpation through particular ways. They heavily drew upon the documentary

[174] Mary-Rose McLaren, "The Aims and Interests of the London Chroniclers of the Fifteenth Century," *Trade, Devotion and Governance: Papers in Later Medieval History*, *eds*., Dorothy J. Clayton, Richard G. Davies and Peter McNiven (Stroud: Alan Sutton, 1994), 158-176.
[175] *Ibid.,* 171.

sources for the political events, as can be understood from the fact that the entries existing in the *London Chronicles*.

Consequently, the evidence up to this point propounds once again that the entries relating to common consent within both groups of chronicles cannot be explained as a part of conscious Lancastrian propaganda. Conversely, they represent the desire of the chroniclers to narrate the events in the way how they happened according to their selection and this selection, and recording process depended heavily on and was limited by the sources which they could employ for their accounts. This motivation behind the compilation of the *London Chronicles* may also be revealing why the compilers did give less place to the issue of hereditary right while they were telling in detail the series of the events from Richard's abdication to Bolingbroke's accession. After all, the election of Bolingbroke by common consent was an event but the question of descent was not.

Another chronicle, the anonymous *An English Chronicle,* gives space to the issue of the election of Bolingbroke by the common consent of the estates:

> After, the duke wente to Westmynestre and their he wasse receyved with procession solemply off bisshoppez(and) monkes. And their wasse seide a solempne masse of Holi Gaste. And after masse he wente into the hall, and the kynges sworde wasse broght befor hym. And theire he satte dovn in his fader seete, and o**t**er lordes sate **t**er also, and muche people stondynge aboute. And their wasse openli the seid resignacion of Kynge Richarde and was accepted of the peple.[176]

It further writes that "when Kynge Richarde wasse desposed & put fro his kyngedom, the lordes and communes of this londe chosen Ser Henry off Bolyngbroke..."[177] Likewise, there is no rationale or grounds to interpret this entry as being in the service of the Lancastrian cause when the narrative in the following parts of the chronicler is taken into consideration. This chronicle is a continuation of

[176] *An English Chronicle*, 24.
[177] *Ibid.,* 26.

the *Brut* tradition. The compiler of the chronicle essentially used two sources. These are the the *Brut*, to which we have referred before, and the *Eulogium Historiarum*. The compiler derives his material heavily from these chronicles. The compiler of An *English Chronicle* used the *Brut* as the essential framework for his text and in some cases he incorporated material from *Eulogium*. However, the chronicler did not make a word for word from either of these works.[178] What is significant is that the chronicler, like the *London Chronicles*, used these materials in a very selective way to give wholeness to his narrative. While the second part of it covering the years between 1440-1461 was composed after 1461 and had a Yorkist point of view because of its harsh criticism against the kingship of Henry VI, the first part of the chronicle, especially its narrative until 1437 has been considered by Kingsford to have a Lancastrian perspective.[179]

However, this does not seem to be an entirely accurate interpretation. The purpose of *An English Chronicle* was not to convey Lancastrian propaganda or apology. This interpretation can be supported by the occurance of criticism of the kingship of Henry IV. For example, in the later parts of *An English Chronicle*, as I will discuss in the following chapters of the thesis, it is possible see argument of the friars against the legitimacy of the Henry's kingship, and the discontent of the people about his governance. As the modern editor of the chronicle has indicated, the critical attitude of the compiler raises doubts about the existence of Lancastrian propaganda machine. Further, it shows that even if there was a Lancastrian propaganda machine, "it was not as powerful or as comprehensive as is sometimes thought."[180] As it has been presented above, *An English Chronicle* has particularly benefited from the *Brut* in its compilation process.

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[178] *Ibid.,* xxxi.
[179] Kingsford, *English Historical Literature*, 128-129.
[180] *An English Chronicle,* lv.

As well as drawing from the *Brut*, *An English Chronicle* has employed other chronicles like the *Eulogium*, documents or eye-witness accounts. According to the *Eulogium*'s narrative, in the Westminster Hall,

> the duke of Lancaster rose, making the sign of the cross, he read a certain document in which appeared that he descended from Henry (III), the son of John, and was the nearest male heir to his blood, and because of these reasons, he claimed the power; all the lords accepted this to the last men, and thus the community shouted this all together. Thus the Archbishops Thomas of Canterbury and of York rose, and kissed his hands and led him to the sumptuously ornamented Royal throne.[181]

We can see another reference to the acceptance of Bolingbroke by the common consent of the whole of the estates. However, the *Eulogium's* entry is actually a bit different from that of *An English Chronicle*, the *Brut* and the *London Chronicles*.

The author of the *Eulogium* connects the common consent of the whole estates to Bolingbroke's claim to the throne through descent. Henry claimed that he was "the nearest male heir" through Henry III and wanted to prove this by means of some evidence. He produced a bill to show that the English crown was his right. As can be understood from this entry, the author considered the approval of the estates as a consequence of Bolingbroke's claim through blood. Though the *Eulogium* was generally highly critical of Richard's reign and was one of the main sources of the other anonymous chronicles of the period, as we will discuss in the following chapters of the thesis, its compiler also keeps his distance from the Lancastrian regime. Its compiler wrote in Canterbury and the content of the work, related to the developments in London, relies heavily much on the other eye-witness accounts or

[181] Tunc surrexit dux Lancastriae; signo Crucis se signans legebat cuamdam cedulam in qua ostendebat quod ipse descendebat de Rege Henrico filio Johannis , et proximus masculus erat de sanguine suo; et istis de causis regnum vendicabat; ad quod omnes domini singulatim assenserunt, et communitas communiter hoc clamabat. Tunc surrexerunt archiepiscopi Cantuariae Thomas et Eborum, et osculabant manus ejus et duxerunt eum ad sedem regiam sumptuose ornatam. *Eulogium*, 383- 384.

hearsay.[182] Thus, it is not a work compiled under Lancastrian patronage and direct influence.

All the entries about "common consent" available in the above-mentioned chronicles bring us to the possible source for the *Brut*, *London Chronicles*, *An English Chronicle* and the *Eulogium*. This is *The Manner of King Richard's Renunciation, and of the election of King Henry the Fourth since the Conquest, etc.* We can find the liveliest depiction of Bolingbroke's accession to the throne by common consent of all the estates in this document, which has been regarded as a memorandum, written independently by Thomas Chillenden, who was then the prior of Christ Church of Canterbury.[183] The document includes an account of the events of 28-30 September, leading to the deposition of Richard II. The document is extremely important since the author of the text was possibly an eye - witness to the whole process from the visit to Richard in his captivity in the Tower of London by the deputation from the all of the estates to the declaration of Richard's resignation of the throne on 30 September. According to the document, a group of deputies from all of the estates, such as the archbishop of York, and the bishop of Hereford for the bishops, the Earl of Westmorland, for the earls, the prior of Christ Church of Canterbury (most probably, Thomas Chillenden) and the abbot of Westminster for abbots, Lord Despenser for the barons and Thomas Erpingham for the knights, came to the Tower to see Richard.[184]

The main aim of the representatives from all the estates was to determine certainly the resignation of Richard. At the end, Richard resigned all his rights to Bolingbroke. Afterwards, as the Duke of Lancaster went to Westminster Abbey on

[182] Gransden, *Historical Writing*, 158.
[183] Given-Wilson, *The Chronicles of the Revolution*, 162. The document was written in French and edited by G.O Sayles but here I use the translation from French into English made by Chris Given-Wilson.
[184] *Ibid*., 163.

30 September, there was a great multitude of people who gathered to see the procession of Henry to Westminster Hall. The crowd "was so great that it filled not only the hall itself but also the adjacent courtyard outside." In Westminster, Bolingbroke sat in the parliamentary seat, which had been the ordinary seat of his father, John of Gaunt, in earlier meetings of the Parliament. At the same time, almost "all of the bishops of England, as well as earls and other lords of parliament" were sitting "in their usual parliamentary seats."[185] After the Archbishop of York, Richard Scrope, had told of "the reasons for King Richard's resignation and the way in which it had been done," the Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Arundel "addressed a general request to all the other commons assembled there asking them, whether they agreed with this; and they shouted out in a loud voice, 'Yes, Yes, Yes'."[186]

The editor of the text, G.O. Sayles, has claimed that this was a Lancastrian propagandistic text. For Sayles, it is a document prepared in order to justify the Lancastrian usurpation in the following months after Bolingbroke came to the throne.[187] However, this argument is open to debate because its content also presents us with some comments in contradiction to the official Lancastrian narrative available in the *Record and Process* proceedings. For example, unlike the official Lancastrian claim that Richard accepted his abdication voluntarily, the author of this text says specifically that Richard at first refused to abdicate.[188] Up to this point, it could be argued that the event itself might be regarded as a carefully managed visual propaganda though there was no evidence for this. The accounts in the chronicles then become a record of this propagandistic event.

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[185] *Ibid*., 164.
[186] *Ibid*., 165.
[187] G.O Sayles, "The Deposition of Richard II: Three Lancastrian Narratives", *Bulletin of Historical Research 54* (1981), 257- 270.
[188] Chris Given-Wilson, "The Manner of King Richard's Renunciation": A 'Lancastrian Narrative'?" *English Historical Review 427* (1993), 365- 370.

III.4 Walsingham's Account of Common Consent: A Lancastrian Narrative?

The document *The Manner of King Richard's Renunciation* also resembles Walsingham's account of the "common consent" issue. Walsingham's narrative, particularly the parts related to the deposition, like the Julius B. II manuscript of the *London Chronicles*, drew heavily upon the Lancastrian *Record and Process* as the basis of his narrative. This official Lancastrian governmental document writes that Richard resigned from the throne voluntarily and on the following day, "in the great hall of Westminster", the dukes and the lords were asked about Richard's renunciation, and they all accepted it for "the good of the realm."[189] In parallel with Lancastrian official documentation about Richard's deposition, Walsingham thinks that Richard renounced "the rule, governance and administration" which belonged to him and resigned from them, by uttering that he was "incapable and incompetent to rule and govern the said realms..."[190] When the estates of the realm were asked "whether they were willing to accept the king's renunciation and abdication of the throne," all of them "gave their unanimous and wholehearted acceptance of this renunciation and abdication of the throne."[191]

The emphasis on the acceptance of the whole of the estates is much more apparent in Walsingham's chronicle than the entries available in the other English chronicles and even those in the *Record and Process*. But, this cannot be considered as evidence of Lancastrianism in Walsingham. Walsingham's account of the event in Westminster Hall is not actually much different from the account of the document *Richard's Renunciation*. Furthermore, though Walsingham's account depends heavily on the *Record and Process*, it cannot be actually said that there was any hint

[189] *The Parliament Rolls, 1399 October Parliament* (General Editor: Given-Wilson), 2005.
[190] *The St. Albans Chronicle:* 162-165.
[191] *Ibid*., 169.

of direction and manipulation of Lancastrian central authority for the idea of the acceptance of common consent of the whole of the estates. Like the information included in *Richard's Renunciation*, Walsingham tells that the estates and the commons "in full agreement appointed and deputed certain commissioners"[192] to assure the deposition of Richard from all his rights as the king of England.

> After the duke had vindicated his right and made his claim, the lords, both spiritual and temporal, and all estates of the realm who were present there were questioned individually and as a body about their opinions of the duke's vindication of his rights and his claim, and they, with all the people, unanimously agreed, without any delay, that the duke should reign over them.[193]

In Walsingham's account, as well a direct reference to the descent by the statement, "the duke had vindicated his right and made his claim" seen above, there is a significant passage which cannot be found in other chronicles or in the *Parliament Rolls*. According to Walsingham, when Henry came to the throne, he spoke to the people in Westminster to thank all the estates of the realm both temporal and spiritual. There, he wished "to claim the throne by right of conquest".[194] However, William Thirning as the justiciar opposed this claim on the ground that this claim by conquest would lead to "the hostility of the whole nation against him." If he wanted to take over the governance of the kingdom in such a way, "he could have disinherited anyone he liked" and would have "changed the laws, made new ones, and annulled the old ones, and as a result no one would have felt all secure in his possessions."[195]

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[192] *Ibid*., 203.
[193] *Ibid*., 207. Walsingham, like the other chroniclers of the period, refers in this passage to the question of descent. The examples for the question of descent have been discussed in the second chapter of the thesis.
[194] *Ibid.,* 209.
[195] *Ibid.,* 209.

This episode, which does not occur in the *Parliament Rolls* and the other chronicles, can be found in Walsingham's chronicle and it shows how even a chronicler, who is conventionally labelled mistakenly as zealot Lancastrian historian by modern historians, was in fact independent from the Lancastrian manipulation. This is very explicit because this claim would be quite dangerous for the future security of Henry's kingly title. It would set an example at the theoretical level for those who came from royal blood to remove Henry from the throne if he was considered to have been unsuccessful or there would be a better choice for rule rather than Bolingbroke. Besides, conquest would be very dangerous for the property rights of the lords because it would give the chance to Bolingbroke for the disinheritance of the lords, which had been practiced by Richard formerly.[196] Therefore, in his speech to the gathering estates, as Walsingham indicated, he said that his intention was not to deprive any of the lords "of his inheritance, franchise, or other rights that he ought to have..., unless he has acted contrary to the benefit of ...the realm,"[197]

III.5 What Was the Aim of Bolingbroke?

The examples from the chroniclers show that there is no evidence of a deliberate Lancastrian historiographical attempt to legitimise Lancastrian regime through the employment of the claim of the "common consent" although it could be asserted that it was a necessary component for the legitimacy of every king standing. Given all this, the question which must be asked at this point is whether the chroniclers' entries about the "common consent" of the whole of the estates reflect or represent the actual intention of the Lancastrian kingship. In other words, did the Lancastrian

[196] Peter McNiven, "Legitimacy and Consent: Henry IV and the Lancastrian Title, 1399-1406," *Mediaeval Studies 44* (1982), 470- 488.
[197] *The St. Albans Chronicle*, 209. This reminds us of Williiam the Conqueor promise to the English to respect the laws of Edward the Confessor.

regime attempt to justify its legitimacy through it? In this case, it is highly doubtful that they wanted to influence the chroniclers to maintain the idea that Lancastrian regime was accepted by parliamentary title or the "common consent" of the estates. As described above, Henry came to the throne in Westminster Hall but his election is open to different comments. Election by the whole nation was one of the standard ways for legitimacy of a king. "Common consent," in a vague sense, was a problem for Bolingbroke. But, it should be indicated that the parliamentary title is anachronistic. Parliament was merely a convenient vehicle to express the "common consent."

As McFarlane indicated, the situation in Westminster on 30 September was highly confusing. When the estates gathered there, they realised that "Richard had already resigned the throne" and there was currently no king.[198] The situation became more complicated when the multitude of Londoners and Lancastrian supporters yelled out for Bolingbroke to be king. In this sense, possible opposition to the deposition was eliminated by the abdication of Richard and Henry made king *fait accompli* by the acclamation of the crowds.[199] It can perhaps be said that Henry wanted to take the support of the crowds and all the estates because election was the standard element of ways for accession to the throne, but there are no grounds to say that he intended to take the throne by the election of the estates or Parliament because he saw the English crown as his right by the descent, as was very clear from his claim to the throne through Henry III.

The approval of his hereditary right was what Bolingbroke actually desired very much. As we can understand from the *Record and Process*, there was no reference to any kind of claim that he wanted formally to take Parliamentary

[198] K.B. McFarlane, *Lancastrian Kings and Lollard Knights* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), 54.
[199] *Ibid*., 54.

approval or wanted to use the election for his claim to the throne. The *Parliament Rolls* simply state that Richard's abdication was accepted by "the estates and people since they thought that..., that this would be very expedient…"[200] This can be interpreted in the way that Richard's deposed by the acceptance of the assembly of the lords with the acclamation and approval of the commonalty of the land. [201]

Additionally, the election might have meant in its widest sense that Bolingbroke was elected as the king due to the lack of any other strong candidate. Therefore, it would become very weak in the legal sense.[202] On the other hand, in spite of the fact that the acclamation, which was very obvious from the chronicles, was one of the main instruments of Lancastrian legitimacy during the process of usurpation, it would not be sufficient to maintain the security of the dynasty. For this reason, it is possible to assert that, although the "Crouchback legend" was rejected by the committee of the experts, as it was discussed above, their refusal was supressed by the acclamation of people and clergy like Thomas Arundel. However, the acclamation of people and approval of the estates were not merely a satisfactory theoretical or a legal solution for the legitimacy of Bolingbroke. Therefore, in the Parliament, he tried to secure the succession of his son to the throne. His son, Henry of Monmouth (Henry V), was appointed as Prince of Wales and it was certainly agreed in the Parliament that if Bolingbroke died and his eldest son were alive, all

[200] *The Parliament Rolls,* October, 1399 (General Editor: Given-Wilson), 2005. The closest case to that of Richard's deposition was the deposition of Edward II. But, Edward III was the direct heir. Neither in the *Parliament Rolls* nor in the chronicles of that period, there is any clear and direct reference to the Parliamentary depositon or the decision of the estates upon this issue. When Edward III was proclaimed as the new king, it was also indicated that his father, Edward II abdicated voluntarily and he retired by the advice of the prelates, nobles and the whole community of the realm. For discussion of Edward II's deposition in the Parliamentary context. See Lapsley, "The Parliamentary Title," 423-449.; and Wilkinson, "the Deposition of Richard II," 215-239.
[201] Wilkinson, *ibid.* 215-239.
[202] McNiven, "Legitimacy", 470-8 8.

the estates "wished to accept the said prince as rightful heir to the aforesaid realm and crown, and to obey him as their king and liege lord."[203]

In summary, it can be claimed that Richard's abdication, for the Lancastrians, to a large extent solved essential problem of the descent. Without Richard, Henry had a better claim to the throne, if not an unchallengeable one. Thus the abdication of Richard certainly determined the course of the events because any possible opposition to the usurpation was obviated by this. On the other hand, the acclamation of the masses in favour of Henry IV was a reply to those, who might have wished the removal of Richard in favour of the Earl of March.[204] The emphasis in the *Record Process* document about Richard's voluntary abdication should be understood in this context.

As a conclusion to this chapter, it may be argued that the existence of the notion of common consent in the chronicles of the period from the *London Chronicles* to Walsingham's work merely shows that they were recording the event and they used either the *Record and Process* document or the memorandum as an essential source for their recording. On the other hand, Henry's purpose was not to have the acceptance of his title by the "common consent" of the estates of the realm or by the parliamentary approval. However, the gathering of the crowd and the lords in Westminster Hall during the deposition of Richard was a propagandistic event in itself and this was successfully employed by the Lancastrians.

Besides, when it is considered that Henry claimed the throne through his right by descent rather than any kind of parliamentary title or the approval of the estates, it can be assumed that the constant use of the word "estate" in the chronicles

[203] *The Parliament Rolls*, October 1399 (General Editor: Wilson). In the Parliaments of June and December 1406, by the statutes, Henry determined the order of succession for his sons. *Ibid.*, June 1406 and December, 1406.
[204] McFarlane, *Lancastrian Kings,* 55.

does not reflect a Lancastrian propagandistic intention. As Chrimes indicated, "it was the natural word to spring to mind in describing the persons" who came together first in the Tower of London to procure the abdication of Richard and later accepted the royal title of Bolingbroke in Westminster.[205]

As has been discussed above, the chroniclers benefited mutually from each other to narrate the events of Richard's deposition. This was especially the case for the *London Chronicles* and the *Brut*. They based their narratives most probably on the accounts of the *Eulogium* and *Richard's Renunciation*. In the case of Walsingham and Usk, the situation was a bit different. Since Walsingham heavily employed the official documents for his narrative and these documents did not give any reference to the Parliamentary election of Bolingbroke, Walsingham's emphasis on the "common consent" of the whole estates need to be approached cautiously. It does not seem to have been motivated by Lancastrian constitutionalism. As a "Lancastrian-inclined historian," Walsingham might have wished to display popular support for the Lancastrian usurpation and employed this notion much to justify the Lancastrian regime because of his anti-Ricardian sentiments. But, as has been touched on above about his entry on William Thirning's warning to Bolingbroke not to claim the throne by the conquest, Walsingham made some additions to the official Lancastrian accounts although much of the narrative for the whole process of the usurpation was nearly the exact copy of the *Record and Process*. He was not writing under the direct control of a Lancastrian king. He was to some extent free from the Lancastrian official point of view.

On the other hand, Adam Usk recorded the usurpation process as a direct eye-witness of the events. Usk wrote that Richard was deposed and Bolingbroke was

[205] S.B. Chrimes, *English Constitutional Ideas in the Fifteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1936), 114.

elected "with the consent and authority of the parliament."[206] As we know, he was a member of the committee which gathered to research the legality of Bolingbroke's claim and was one of those who went to the Tower of London to visit Richard and who was present at Westminster Hall when Richard's resignation was read. In 1399, he was under the patronage of Thomas Arundel, a close ally of Bolingbroke. However, Usk wrote much of his work after 1415. He compiled his chronicle for the former years from his own memory and from official documents. It should also be noted that after 1415, "there were reasons for attributing the deposition to a regularly constituted parliament that did not exist in 1400."[207]

Moreover, if we think how he criticised Henry's kingship in the later parts of his chronicle and presented his doubts about Henry's legitimacy through hereditary right, Usk's usage of consent of the parliament cannot be regarded as a part of the Lancastrian narrative. Thus the existence of almost similar accounts on the common consent issue derives actually from the fact that the chronicles drew upon similar sources and desired to tell the complicated and confusing political events as they were on the basis of eye-witness accounts. The chronicles of the period all had a more or less independent character. They certainly did not make these entries to legitimise Lancastrian regime.

Therefore, they did not have in their minds any purpose in order to express the legality of the usurpation with reference to the word "estates." However, the existence of the references to common consent in the chronicles led to compelling inferences in the later interpretations of the Lancastrian usurpation. In the 1460s, the pro-Lancastrian lawyer and political theorist John Fortescue would write that " the king did not impose subsidies or make laws without the consent of the three

[206] *Usk*, 69.
[207] Lapsley, "The Parliamentary Title," 423-449.

estates."[208] Even the Yorkist - inclined chronicle of John Hardyng would surprisingly explain the Lancastrian usurpation by the effective role of the estates in the Parliament. Although Hardyng indicated that "the youth then of the Mortimer" was the nearest male heir to the throne "by trewe direccion" - as it is known, Hardyng has reason to support the claims of the Mortimers - he would nonethless write that "...Henry of Lancaster was made kyng by resignacion, renunciacion, and deposayle, and election of the parliamente..." [209]

Lastly, it should be indicated that Chrimes, relying heavily upon such evidence, claimed that the word "estates" acquired afterwards a legal meaning particularly for the later generations and became identical with parliament in spite of the fact that the estates of the realm did not come together and operate with significant "constitutional functions" in the process of Lancastrian usurpation.[210] However, when looked at the *Parliament Rolls*, this in in contrast to how Edward IV claimed his right to the throne. The documentary evidence in the *Parliament Rolls* emphasises Edward IV's hereditary right as well as the tyranny of Lancastrian government for the righteousness of his claim. The document does not refer to the role of the estates in this process. Furthermore, the evidence in Hardyng's Chronicle as well as *An English Chronicl*e, whose entries for the reign of Henry VI have heavily anti-Lancastrian sentiments, do not offer any legal or constitutional implications. Conversely, both chronicles underline the hereditary title of Edward IV along with the *Parliament Rolls* as a consequence of their extensive use of the documentary evidence.

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[208] Cited, *Ibid.,* 115.

[209] *The Chronicle of John Hardyng*, 350-351. Hardyng just writes that Edward, the earl of March began his reign "by counsaill of the lords... both sprituall and temporall…" *ibid.,* 406. The compiler of *An English Chronicle* ends the chronicle by writing that Edward, the Earl of March became king after Henry VI by referring possibly to the Mortimer claim. *An English Chronicle*, 100. For the details of the hereditary claim of Edward, see the *Parliament Rolls*, November 1461 (General Editor: Given-Wilson).

[210] Chrimes, *Constitutional Ideas*, 114.

CHAPTER IV

THE THEME OF "COMMON GOOD" AND CRITICISM OF LANCASTRIAN KINGSHIP IN THE CHRONICLES DURING THE REIGN OF HENRY IV

IV.1 Introduction

In the previous chapters I have concentrated primarily on the reflections of the shaping and the establishment of the Lancastrian regime in the chronicles. For this purpose, I chose two determinant themes, the problem of succession and the question of "common consent" issue owing to the fact that the accounts of both of these themes in the chronicles were habitually considered by modern scholars as evidence either of Lancastrian constitutional experiment or as an indicator of the chronicles' roles as a contribution to the legitimisation of Lancastrian dynasty.

In this sense, the main purpose of these chapters has been to determine whether the essential historical narratives of the Lancastrian period were really the mere instruments of the Lancastrian propaganda machine. The discussion in the previous chapters demonstrated that the chroniclers maintained a discreet attitude towards Lancastrian dynastic claims as the divergent approaches on the hereditary right of the Lancastrian kings in the historiography explicitly displayed from the very beginning of the Lancastrian rule until its end. Moreover, I discussed the reasons

why the entries on "common consent" in the chronicles cannot be assumed to be a device and propagation of constitutional legitimisation of Lancastrian dynasty.

This chapter will be devoted to the discussion of another pertinent question: how did the historians of the period consider the application and practice of kingship under the reign of the Lancastrian kings? Did they simply try to legitimise the policies of the Lancastrians? These problematics apparently evolve around the theme of "common good" in the chronicles. "Common good" does not appear as a mature and well-established concept in the chronicles of the early Lancastrian period. In the major chronicles of the time, there is no phrase like "common good," except for one entry in the *Eulogium* (*ad commune subsidium ordinata*), which can be translated as "common good".[211] But, as a comprehensive idea and the basis of perfect kingship and governance, the theme of "common good" has shaped the views and narratives of the early chroniclers about the Lancastrian kings.

The "common good" has a broad meaning. The history of the concept has been discussed by scholars in several sub-disciplines of social sciences. It refers, in its broadest sense, to the maintenance of the well-being of the community or society. In the chronicles of the Lancastrian period, it appears in this meaning. It generally stands for the observation of the basic rights of the subjects, and the establishment of the justice and law. It occurs in the chronicles of Henry IV's reign, as a direct criticism of Henry IV's style of kingship. Given this, in the first part of this chapter, a general theoretical framework will be sketched about what medieval writers understood from the notion of "common good", how they perceived the office of

[211] In the studies on medieval political theory and phraseology, the meaning of the word "communitas" has been closely investigated and debated. The words "commons", "commune", and "community" are interrelated in medieval phraseology. It refers to public, especially in the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, not only to the lords or upper classes. For a discussion of the word and literature see John Watts, "The Pressure of the Public on Later Medieval Politics," in *Political Culture in Late Medieval Britain: Fifteenth Century IV*, eds. Linda Clark and Christine Carpenter (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2004), 159-180. The word "common" can be seen in the chronicles of the period but they have been commonly used for the Commons in the Parliament.

kingship, and why they emphasized often the "common good" principle in the period I have discussed. In the main body of the chapter, I will demonstrate that the attacks of the chroniclers on Ricardian kingship, in terms of the preservation of the rights and establishment of the common good in the realm, turned into a criticism of Lancastrian kingship just after Henry IV's accession to the throne.

Throughout the chapter, a discussion of how the chronicles of Henry IV's reign criticised Ricardian kingship in the sense of just kingship and the principle of "common good," will also be made. This question warrants discussion because the chroniclers, particularly Thomas Walsingham, identified the kingly practices of Richard II with tyranny. He used the word of *tyrannus* in his chronicle. The existing emphasis on the tyranny of Richard were also included in the *Articles of Deposition*, the official Lancastrian documentation for the justification of Lancastrian usurpation, though the word tyranny is not included in them. In these documents, the tyranny of Richard II is defined as the opposite of just kingship, which needs to preserve the common good in the realm. Therefore, some occasional references to the representations of Richard II are closely concerned with the argumentation of this chapter about the perception of the chroniclers about Lancastrian kingship.

With regard to this general outline, it will be argued in this chapter that the chroniclers' accounts of the style and practice of Lancastrian kingship, in its narrowest sense, the principle of "common good", were shaped by two motives. Firstly, the chroniclers, as in their accounts of "common consent," aimed to narrate the events as they happened. Secondly, while they were evaluating the actions of the Lancastrian kings, the well-established general notions about true kingship, which determined the form and content of their attitude and criticism against Richard II, and their personal interests, also gave shape to their criticism of the Lancastrian

kingship. Given this, how they perceived and narrated the actions of Lancastrian kings shows us, within the general argument of this thesis, that the chroniclers' approach to the style of Lancastrian kingship refutes the conventional assertion that they were the instruments of the so-called Lancastrian propaganda machine.

IV.2 Kingship and the Principle of "Common Good"

As I have indicated in the introduction part of the chapter, if we set aside the reflections and echoes of acute and profound crisis of political and legal legitimacy for the Lancastrian regime in the narrative sources, the problem of how the chroniclers of the period saw the practice of Lancastrian kingship needs closer attention. It is necessary to focus on the question of whether they attempted to legitimise all the actions of the Lancastrian kings, and considered their practices as a proper application of just and true kingship, for propagandistic purposes, without any interrogation on the basis of well-established ideas on the duties of a king for his subjects. A discussion of this problem is necessary because it is really difficult to treat the use of political power and legitimacy as ultimately different issues in medieval political thought and practice since the full exercise of political power within the political realm is embodied in the concept of kingship.[212]

The subject of this chapter is not actually a detailed theoretical discussion of the concept of kingship but a sort of general and clear framework should be outlined here. The notion of kingship had various dimensions in the medieval mind and these are concerned with the observation of the principle of common good. These aspects

[212] Although it is not completely true to say that the problem of legitimacy can be merely confined to the sphere of high politics, it is necessary to deal with the links between legitimacy and the theme of kingship for a coherence in the limits of this study since Lancastrian chronicles mainly concentrate on the affairs around the king and his subjects. For a most recent study dealing with the operation power relations through various levels of social order in the middle ages see especially *Power and Identity in the Middle ages: Essays in Memory of Rees Davies*, eds. Huw Pryce and John Watts (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

appear very often in the narrative sources of Lancastrian period. The medieval king had to grant justice to his subjects and remove all evils from the realm. Further, he had to function as a "moral authority, which could command obedience."[213] For example, in the work of Thomas Hoccleve, the English poet, who had a very close relationship with the Lancastrian regime, it was the king's responsibility "to kepen and maynteene iustice..." since "a kyng is by couenant of ooth maad in his coronacioun broundë to iustices souvacioun."[214] In this respect, it can be said that in spite of the fact that the centrality of the discussion about true kingship in the narrative sources was apparent in many ways from what John Watts has called "everyday workings of the polity" to different functions and representation of royal power, some basic notions like the establishment of justice in the realm were dominant in these sources.[215]

We do not see very explicit descriptions and representations of kings' duties in the chronicles of Lancastrian period. For the chroniclers, the main purpose was not to give advice to the kings. For this reason, the clear definitions and representations can be seen in the other narrative sources such as poems or the genre of *Mirror of Princes*. In several cases, the notion of kingship rests on firm preconditions concerning the common good of the people in these works. It is the necessary condition for the limitation upon a king's free actions. George Ashby, a poet and clerk of the signet of Henry VI and later of Margaret of Anjou, in a work written as a

[213] J. Dunbabin, "Government," in The *Cambridge History of Medieval Thought, c. 350-1450*, ed. J.H. Burns (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 477-515.
[214] *Hoccleve's Works*, *The Regement of Princes & Fourteen Minor Poems*, ed. Frederick J. Furnivall, (London: EETS, 1897), 91.
[215] John Watts, *Henry VI,* 16.

guide for Henry VI's son Edward,[216] points to this as the fundamental aspect of true kingship:

> Tthe (sic) god/ of his omnipotencie
> Hath brought you now forth to our grete comfort,
> So Ieusu encrece you, to Iustifie
> And rule this present tyme for owre support,
> That people may haue cause to report
> The blessednesse of youre estate Roial,
> Pleasyng god to the wele of vs. al.[217]

The king was considered to be in cooperation with his subjects. Thus the authors thought it necessary to describe the indispensable duties of rulers to the ruled. In addition to the narrative sources and *Mirror of Princes* genre of the fifteenth century, it also appears very explicitly in fourteenth-century sources with a reference to the unity and harmony of the king with his subjects, as in Langland's *Piers Plowman* in the expression: "then came a king, knighthood hym ladde, might of the commons made him to reign."[218] On the other hand, one might encounter an emphasis on the elevated and indivisible attributes of the office of kingship with a distinction between public character of the office and personal character of the king. Thomas Hoccleve expresses this view by saying "and syn a kyng by way of his office to God ylikened is, as in maneere" and if he personally follows the truth which is intrinsic to his office by the intimacy of his office to God, "may the vice of untrouthe nat in a kyng appeere."[219]

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[216] *The Idea of Vernacular: An Anthology of Middle English Literary Theory, 1280-1520*, eds. Jocelyn Wogan-Browne, Nicholas Watson, Andrew Taylor and Ruth Evans (University Park: The Pennsylvania University Press, 1999), 56-57.
[217] George Ashby, "Active Policy of A Prince" in *George Ashby's Poems: Edited From the 15th Century Mss at Cambridge*, ed. Mary Bateson (London: EETS, 1899), 12-40.
[218] William Langland, *Piers Plowman, The B Version: Will's Visions of Piers Plowman, Do-well, Do Better and Do-Best Vol:2*, eds. George Kane & E.Talbot Donaldson (London: Athlone Press, 1975), 234-235.
[219] Thomas Hoccleve, *The Regiment of the Princes*, ed. Charles R. Blyth (Kalamazoo: Western Michigan University Publications), 110.

Although the game of power was played along the lines of tension on which many actors took place in proportion to their potencies and there were different emphases on the functioning of the office of kingship in the narrative sources, it seems that there was a common consensus about the place of kingship as the highest and most practical application of political power in the realm. These afore mentioned examples indicate that there seem to have been an unwritten consensus about the indisputable and unchallengeable place and position of the kings in the medieval mind**.** So, given the sacrality of the office of kingship, the king's political power was at the heart of the political government throughout the Middle Ages in spite of blurred separations between those two aspects - public and personal.[220] As already mentioned, England was not an exception to this. English kings "deliberately stressed the sovereignty and majesty of their unique status. They never dwelt upon its limits."[221] They took place at the top of the pyramid of social order as the most supreme figure.

However, as underlined above by a quotation from Hoccleve, a writer from the early Lancastrian period, the institution of kingship was defined as an office. This office had two essential tasks. One was "the defence of the realm" and the other one was "the provision of justice."[222] John Fortescue lawyer and political theorist of the later Lancastrian period, would reiterate this view very clearly: "Ffor though his estate be the highest estate temporall in the earth, yet it is an office, in wich he

[220] The best recent account for the position of medieval kingship as an institution see Francis Oakley, *Kingship: The Politics of Enchantment* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2006), 108-132. Walter Ullman, *Principles of Government and Politics in the Middle Ages* (London: Methuen, 1961). 108-132. Ernst H. Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Medieval Political Theology* 7th. ed. and trans. William Chester Jordan (Princeton: Princeton University, 1997).

[221] Hicks, *English Political* Culture, 28. For a very explicative summary of the perception of government particularly in the Late-Medieval England literary sources see: Gerald Harris, *Shaping the Nation,* 3-14.

[222] Watts, *Henry VI*, 21.

mynestrith to his raume defence and justice."[223] In this sense, the general theoretical framework for the concept of kingship and how the narrative authors of the period understood the responsibilities of the king can be interpreted in two ways. One the one hand, it represents at best "deep rooted assumptions" about the indisputable status of the kingship. On the other hand, it displays the restraints on a medieval king with reference to the concept of "public good" despite the fact there was no strictly and properly defined "constitutional law of kingship".[224]

When all the contemporary references are considered, the intense predominance and significance of the concept of kingship in the narrative sources are not unusual. Rather, it simply displays the ordinary and natural course of medieval political thought. No doubt these observations and interpretations seemed to have been deduced from some general principles for true and perfect application of kingship in the political tracts or the genre of *Mirror of Princes*. These observations were chiefly apparent in the "enormous bulk of literature", varying "from the moral recommendations made to a prince (as in the *Tractatus de Regimine Principum ad Regem Henricim Sextum*) to the highly technical works in more attractive forms."[225] That perception appeared gradually with the merging of the Aristotelian view on just and proper government in Greek *polis* with Christian ideas of true government and kingship. This was achieved precisely in the systematisation of medieval thinkers such as Thomas Aquinas and John of Salisbury- who was very influential and widely read in late medieval England.[226]

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[223] Fortescue, *The Governance of England* 127. Similar descriptions of how the king's action would be limited can be observed in a variety of sources. For a representation of the late medieval sources in this sense, see Watts, *ibid*., 13-51.
[224] Alfred L. Brown, *The Governance of Late Medieval England, 1272-1461* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1989), 5.
[225] *Four English Political Tracts of the Later Middle Ages*, ed. Jean-Philippe Genet (London: Camden Fourth Series: Vol: 18, 1977), xvi. xv-xvi.
[226] Amnon Linder, "The Knowledge of John of Salisbury in the Late Middle Ages," *Studi Medievali* 1*8* (1977), 881-932.

The Aristotelian proposition "that the governments which have a regard to the common interest are constituted in accordance with strict principles of justice, and are therefore true forms"[227] was meticulously integrated into Aquinas' political theory who reformulated the task and responsibilitties of the office of kingship. Aristotle's fundamental arguments were prevalently accepted and they constituted the basis for the medieval perception of the kingship. For Aristotle, each community was "established with a view to some good; for everyone always acts in order to obtain that which they think good."[228] So the governors had to be more responsible and dutiful for their subjects since just government was in contrast to those forms of government "which regard only the interest of the rulers." These were "all defective and perverted forms."[229] Under the influence of this Aristotelian political view, Aquinas described the king as "one who rules the people of one city or province…for the common good (*bonum commune*)".[230] This "common good" principle was crucial: "since society must have the same end as the individual man" it would be possible to "attain the possession of God" by means of proper and virtuous life. [231] Thus, there were three main obligations for a ruler to establish the common good in the society. These were "securing the welfare"[232] of the society that he ruled; to establish justice, in contrast to the vices of a tyrannical ruler; and to pursue virtuous

[227] Aristotle, *The Politics*, ed. Stephen Everson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 61.
[228] *Ibid*., 1.
[229] *Ibid*.,61.
[230] St. Thomas Aquinas, *On Kingship, To the King of Cyprus*, ed. Gerald B. Phelan (Toronto: The Pontificial Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1949), 10. Aquinas used the terms *bonum commune* and *bonum privatum* to make a distinction between the public welfare and private interests in his works. For a detailed discussion of the effect of Aristotelian thought on Aquinas political theory see especially R. Eccleshall, *Reason and Order in Politics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978). As the most recent work on Aristotle and Aquinas' discussions of common good; see Mary M. Keys, *Aquinas, Aristotle and the Promise of the Common Good* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).
[231] Aquinas, *On Kingship*, 60.
[232] *Ibid*.,10.

actions for the sake of society[233] since the virtuous action of the king individually was directly relevant to the "good of community (*bonum commune*)."[234]

In line with these fundamental principles observed in Aristotle's and Aquinas' works, as mentioned for the literary sources above, examples from the genre of *mirror of princes* also required the same qualities for the king. For instance, in three different versions of Pseudo-Aristotelian text, *Secreta Secretorum*, these contemplations have been classified and arranged in order under short headings. Like the examples mentioned above, the author of the *Secreta* touches carefully on the prospect from the king for "Iustice in yelding to every man that is his of right" by the proper application of this, he will "lyve and regne in prosperite and pees, and shall haue at his wille alle his desires."[235] As Jean-Paul Genet has indicated, all these political writings "must be regarded as the product of an intricate network of influences" even if they had been written in different forms.[236] In the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries, the most important texts were translated and circulated especially by the literary growth of the vernacular language. *Mirrors of Princes* like Giles of Rome's *De Regimine Principum*[237] and the *Secretum Secretorum* were widely disseminated among the literate classes, the aristocracy and merchants in late medieval England.[238] The theoretical ideas included in these works were popular

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[233] *Ibid*.,11-32.

[234] For an extensive discussion of the concept of common good in the Middle Ages; look M.S. Kempshall, *Common Good in Late Medieval Political Thought* (Oxford: Oxford University Press,1999), particularly 76-200. See also Joseph Canning, *A History of Medieval Political Thought 300-1450* (New York: Routledge, 1996), 110-150.

[235] *Three Prose Versions of the Secreta Secretorum*, ed. Robert Steele (London: Early English Text Society,1898), 10.

[236] Genet, *Four English*, xv-xvi.

[237] Unlike the chronicles of late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries, in the Middle English translation of *De Regimie Principum*, we can see the word of common profit. "a kyng takeþ heede to þe commyne profit a tyrand to his owne profit." *John Trevisa's Middle English Translation of the 'De regimine principum' of Aegidius Romanus*, eds. David C. Fowler, Charles F. Briggs, and Paul G. Remley (New York: Garland Publishing, 1997), 333.

[238] Karen Cherewatuk, " 'Gentyl' Audiences and 'Grete Bookes': Chivalric Manuals and the Morte Darthur," in *Arthurian Literature XV* eds. James P. Carley, Felicity Riddy (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer,1997), 205-216.

because the readers were thinking that "the theories propounded in these texts were immediately relevant to the everyday practice of politics."[239] The circulation of such ideas and works naturally influenced both the political consciousness of the nobility, who prepared the *Articles of Deposition* (which include the formal accusations against Richard II on the basis of common good principle), and the perception of chroniclers like Adam Usk and Walsingham, who were well-educated men of their time, as it will be shown in this chapter.

IV.3 Lancastrian Usurpation and the Common Good

It should be indicated that there were significant practical reasons why the historians of the Lancastrian period emphasised especially the king's responsibility to establish the common good of all his subjects as well as the theoretical ones related to notions about the kingly office. These were mainly concerned with what Henry IV promised to his subjects after the deposition of Richard II. When Henry IV came to the throne, he displayed himself as a king who would take the counsel of the lords and the commons. He would reduce the taxation, and rule for the common good of his people.[240] In the October Parliament of 1399, he promised that "the just laws and customs which the people have chosen should be observed."[241] Thus, what he promised to his subjects was that he would "change the practice of kingship and the basis of royal rule."[242] In this sense, one of the underlying factors, which contributed

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[239] Susanne Saygin, Humphrey*, Duke of Gloucester (1390-1447) and the Italian Humanists* (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 61.

[240] Michael Bennett, "Henry of Bolingbroke and the Revolution of 1399" in *Henry IV: The Establishment of the Regime*, eds. Gwilym Dodd and Douglas Biggs (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2003), 9-34.

[241] As it will be remembered, *Parliament Rolls*, 1399 October Parliament. (General Editor: Given-Wilson), 2005.

[242] Harris, *Shaping*, 491. Modern scholars have commented on Richard's "unorthodox kingship," which according to Chris Given-Wilson "had a destabilising effect on the politics of the reign and made him too many enemies." See Wilson, Chronicles of the Revolution, 1., and Tuck, *Richard II*, 225. In a treatise, which was written for Richard II in 1392, a general ideology of Ricardian kingship

to the ascension of Bolingbroke, was the conviction that he would enact a new style of kingship different from Ricardian kingship in the framework of good government.

Before the deposition of Richard, Bolingbroke collected a group of knights and lesser nobility around himself as a part of broad Lancastrian affinity. However, the Lancastrian usurpation was not just the achievement of this Lancastrian affinity. It depended on a broad coalition of private interests of the leading figures of the period such as Archbishop Arundel and the Percies, who had been dissatisfied with the Ricardian regime, and also had popular support with reference to the common good of the realm.[243] All these factors demonstrate that the common good was the hinge upon which all the private interests and opposition turned. The demand of the king's subjects for just kingship, which favours the common good and well-being of the realm, was the real cause behind the broad support behind Bolingbroke. This popular support for the cause of Bolingbroke was testified by the major chronicles of the period.[244]

As it has been mentioned above, the Ricardian regime was attacked on the basis of the violation of the basic rights of its subjects and the common good of the realm. This was a natural consequence of the legitimisation attempts for the usurpation. As Lucy Brown has pointed out, "the authority for Henry's usurpation... in terms of both the removal of his predecessor, and of his accession, was largely drawn from Richard's offences against the common good and the consequent

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can be observed. "Rex ideo, qui universos regni sui subditos sibi, pro ut, iuris est obedire desiderat..."(The king therefore, who had subjected all parts of his kingdom to himself, in as much as he desired to be subject to what was lawful..), "Optima est gubernicio in qua per unum regem perfeccior unitas reservatur" (The best government is the one in which unity is preserved more perfectly through a single king). "De Quadripartita Regis Specie" in Genet, *Four English*, 22-39, at 36. For Richard's kingship particularly see Simon Walker, "Richard II's Views on Kingship" in *Rulers and Ruled in Late Medieval England: Essays Presented to Gerald Harris*, eds. Rowena E. Archer and Simon Walker (London: The Hambledon Press, 1995), 49-97.

[243] Bennett, "Henry of Bolingbroke", 9-34.

[244] For example, see *Usk*, 60-61.

necessity that he should be replaced by someone who would do a better job."[245] Consistent with this view, it is very obvious that the *Articles of the Deposition*, the most significant part of the *Record and Process*, were deliberately arranged to attack these aspects of Ricardian kingship. On the other hand, it was the basis for the Lancastrians to "construct an ideology of kingship"[246] and legitimise their usurpation. If the content of the articles are examined, it can be detected that the charges against Richard II and the constructive vocabulary for Lancastrian kingship were obviously shaped around the theme of common good. For example, the first item of the Articles underlined that:

> the king is charged for his evil government, namely, that he gave the goods and possessions of the crown to unworthy persons, and indiscreetly dissipated them, as a result of which he had to impose needlessly grievous and intolerable burdens upon the people, and committed innumerable other crimes.[247]

In addition to this, several other examples relating to the common good of the people in the realm can be observed in the other accusations brought against Ricardian kingship. What the writers of the *Articles* did was to present the style of Ricardian kingship as a diversion from the earlier practice of English kings, which was defined on the basis of the protection of the rights of the subjects:

> Whereas the king of England used to live honestly upon the revenues of the kingdom and the patrimony belonging to the crown, without oppressing his people except at times when the realm was burdened with the expense of war; this king, despite the fact that throughout almost the whole of his time there were truces in operation between the kingdom of England and its enemies, not only gave away the greater part of his said patrimony to unworthy persons, but, because of this, was obliged to impose grants upon his realm almost every year, which greatly oppressed his people and impoverished his nation;

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[245] Lucy Brown, "Continuity and Change in the Parliamentary Justifications of the Fifteenth Century Usurpations", *Conflicts, Consequences and the Crown in the late Middle Ages*, ed. Linda Clark (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2007), 157-174.
[246] John M. Theilmann,"Caught Between Political Theory and Political Practice: 'The Record and Process of The Deposition of Richard II'", *History of Political Thought* 25 (2004), 599-619.
[247] *Parliament Rolls*, 1399 October Parliament. (General Editor: Given-Wilson), 2005.

> nor did he use these grants for the benefit or welfare of the English kingdom, but he dissipated it prodigously upon the ostenation, pomp and vainglory of his own person.[248]

The Articles of Deposition thus focused on the fact that Richard transgressed the rights of his subjects. He did not maintain the "rightful laws and customs of the realm." Conversely, he acted completely "according to his own arbitrary will."[249] In this sense, like the examples from the *Mirror of Princes* and the narrative sources mentioned before, they depended on the established principles of the kingly office. The items in the *Articles*, therefore, referred to the previous laws and conventions like *Magna Carta*.[250] All these show us that the traditional and already-entrenched notions about the concept of kingship and, the duty of the king for the establishment of the common good and justice in the realm, had shaped the minds of the men of Lancastrian usurpation. Given these, we can ask some questions crucial to the scope of the thesis. Did the theoretical and conventional ideas, which were employed by the Lancastrians in the *Articles* on the "common good" principle, directly determine the chroniclers' views on the Lancastrian kingship and common good? Can we consider the entries and accounts related to these issues as a reflection of Lancastrian propaganda?

The remainder of this chapter will essentially focus on seeking to answer these questions. Therefore, I will examine firstly the chronicles of the early Lancastrian period such as those of Adam Usk and Thomas Walsingham. In addition, the evidence available in the anonymous chronicles of the period like the *Eulogium*, the *London Chronicles*, *An English Chronicle* and the *Brut* will also be discussed.

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[248] *Ibid*.
[249] *Ibid*.
[250] For example, the 29th. Clause of the Articles explicitly accuses Richard of violating the *Magna Carta*. According to the Articles, Richard infringed "the liberties of the church as approved in the Great Charter, which he had sworn to uphold..." *Ibid.*

IV.4 Adam Usk, Common Good and Lancastrian Kingship

As it was evident from several events and subjects in the chronicles, for the practical reasons such as incurring of the wrath of the king, the chroniclers refrained from very explicit and unreserved expressions of the Lancastrian kingship and the proper application of the common good principle. This is in contradiction to how the chroniclers represented or reflected the actions of the former king, Richard II. For instance, Usk wrote as an afterthought that Richard had always thought that "the king's power belonged solely and entirely to him..."[251] For he violated the basic rights of his subjects and had not been "guided" in his actions "by God and by the support of" his people, he fell "miserably into the hands of Duke Henry, amid the silent curses of" his people.[252] This shift is perceptible because a considerable number of the entries in the chroniclers of the Lancastrian period on Ricardian kingship date from after the deposition. In parallel, it should be indicated that Usk had begun writing the sections of his chronicle on Richard II immediately after the Lancastrian usurpation. However, the particular matter of how the Lancastrian kings had to construct amicable relationships with their subjects and the perception about the obligations of the king to preserve the rights of his subjects and the establishment of justice in the realm were much more conspicuous in the chronicles than other themes. It is preferable to start the discussion of this part with Adam Usk owing to the fact that from these chroniclers, two aspects of Adam Usk's account force us to consider his representations about Lancastrian kingship with reference to the common good theme.

[251] *Usk.*, 51.
[252] *Ibid.*, 91.

Firstly, Usk was, as it has been mentioned previously, an ecclessiastical lawyer and expert, who was a member of the deposition committee of Richard II. This fact indicates that he was aware of the formal and conceptual framework within which *The Articles of Deposition* had been prepared. According to Usk's own testimony in his chronicle, the reasons for deposing Richard II and how this might be done within the legal framework were discussed by experts, "one of whom was the writer of this present work."[253] So, he was one of those men, who framed the charges against Richard II. As mentioned above, these charges were mainly concerned with the violation of the common good principle. In addition to this, because of his education and professional background he was possibly more conscious than the several other chroniclers of the period of the constitutional and theoretical ideas about the concept of kingship, which had been developed in the previous centuries, in England and Europe.

The evidence for this aspect of Usk can be seen in his chronicle. Usk attracts attention to the point that while they were preparing the reasons for the deposition of Richard, they drew upon the grounds available in the Canon Law about the deposition of the kings by the popes. They employed one precedent to legitimise the usurpation on the basis of the common good principle. This was the deposition of Frederick II by Innocent IV at the Council of Lyons in 1245. By quoting from the sentence of deposition of Frederick, Usk points out that the legal experts decided on that the charges such as "...dispossession of his subjects, the reduction of his people to servitude..." were valid reasons "according to the chapter 'Ad Apostolice' taken from 'Re Iudicata' in the Sextus, and the other things noted there-for deposing

[253] *Ibid.,* 62-63.

him."[254] The third factor was his pejorative representation on Ricardian kingship and Thomas Arundel's patronage of Usk. How Adam Usk damned the arbitrary acts of Richard and how he described the violation of the common good under his reign will be briefly displayed below. Besides, Thomas Arundel's patronage is also very obviously indicated by Usk.

In summary, these three factors categorically determined Usk's writing on the kings' responsibilities for the sake of the common good of the people in the realm. Besides, they have displayed Usk's entries about both Richard II's tyrannical kingship[255] and the fact that he gave space to criticism against the Lancastrian kingship on the grounds that the Lancastrian kings did fall in the danger of violating the common good principle. These factors force us to reconsider whether Usk's discussion about the theme of common good was a part of Lancastrian propaganda machine or Lancastrian attempts for legitimacy.

As the most recent editor of Usk's chronicle, Chris Given-Wilson, has indicated, Usk took kingship for granted.[256] Usk's acceptance and respect for the kingship as an office can be observed in different parts of his chronicle. Usk does not lean towards the limitations upon the king's particular will as long as he was a legitimite ruler acting within the conventional procedures. For example, Usk incurred the wrath of Henry IV when he was on the Continent due to his close relationships with the opponents of Lancastrian regime, and for this reason, Usk's property was

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[254] *Ibid*., 62-63. Full text of deposition bull of Innocent IV on Frederick II see http://www.piar.hu/councils/ecum13.htm#Bull_of_excommunication. Accessed on 26 January 2012. For a discussion how the grounds in this deposition Bull was used in England for the depositions of both Edward II and Richard II see Theilmann, 614-615; and G.E. Caspary, "The Deposition of Richard II and the Canon Law", *Proceedings of the Second International International Congress on Medieval Canon Law*, eds. Stephen Kuttner and J. Joseph Ryan (Rome: S. Congregatio de Semineriis et Studiorum Universitatibus, 1965), 189-201., Valente, The *Theory and and Practice*, 199.

[255] Actually, Usk does not employ the word, "tyranny" in his chronicle. However, it can be seen in Philip Repyngdon's letter, which is available in Usk's chronicle. Walsingham, in some parts of his chronicle, employs it to define Ricardian kingship. The examples from Walsingham's chronicle will be shown below.

[256] *Ibid.,* lxii.

confiscated. But, when he sought royal pardon, Usk admitted that he had been at fault in flirt with the enemy.[257] He considered Henry IV's harsh attitude to him as legitimate. The only possible point for the criticism of the king is when he acted outside the justice. So, the criticism focuses on the personal actions of the king and not on the office.

In this sense, it can be claimed that for Usk, the tight rule of a king was the best way of government. But, its smooth and proper running was closely related to the common good of the subjects in the realm. For Usk, it was "incumbent on a king to distribute lands and titles to his subjects rather than hoard them for himself or concentrate power in the hands of a few."[258] Two examples, one from England and the other one about France, show how Usk tied the true form of kingship to the establishment of the common good in the realm. According to Usk, Charles VI of France humiliated the peers of France, the spiritual dukes, the spiritual counts and temporal dukes and counts such as the duke of Aquitiane, Burgundy and Champagne. He made use of "every opportunity to take them for himself." Consequently, this was one of the most significant reasons of the troubles in France since when Charles VI went mad, "the duke of Burgundy claimed that he alone should hold the reins of government."[259] For the case of England, an example from Richard II's reign is revealing. It is known that Thomas Arundel, Usk's patron, was sent into exile by Richard II after the execution of his brother the Earl of Arundel because of the accusation of treason. In his entries related to the Richard II's relationships with the Arundels, Usk also reflects his own view about the king in a

[257] *Ibid.,* 235.
[258] *Ibid.,*, lxii.
[259] *Ibid*., 216-17. Similar to the comments of Adam Usk, the French chronicler of the period, Juvenel de Ursins underlines the principle of common good. He says that the French princes of the period were standing up for their self-interests in lieu of of the common good of the people in their realm. Look Richard Vaughan, *John the Fearless* (London: Longman, 2002), 29.

retrospective look at Richard II. Usk seems to support the nobility in their attempt to limit the authoritarian governance of Richard. In Usk's chronicle, we can see a long passage of speech between the Earl of Arundel and Richard II. The Earl of Arundel had been charged with treason against the king. In his defence, Arundel denied the accusations and accused Richard of violating the promises that he had given before. Despite his defence, the Earl was condemned and executed. After giving the defence of Arundel, Usk says that "I have no doubt that he has been admitted to the fellowship of the saints."[260]

These examples display how Usk considered the royal office. It is very obvious that Usk thought that the particular will of the kings had to be limited and the kings had to observe the common good in the realm. On the other hand, it must be indicated that a sound and tangible model for conventional image of true and perfect kingship in the sense of the observation of the common good of the people in the all chronicles of the Lancastrian period can be detected in Usk's chronicle. The entry is about distress for the governmental style of Henry IV. Therefore, it will show us how Usk perceived the acts of Lancastrian kings. The comment does not in fact belong to Adam Usk. It has been described so eloquently in the well-known letter to the king by Philip Repyngdon, the abbot of Leicester and Henry IV's confessor.[261] It should be indicated that this letter is available only in Usk's chronicle.

According to Repyngdon, "law and justice" had been "the exiles from the kingdom" in the reign of Richard II. But, when Henry IV came to the throne, it was

[260] *Usk*, 29-31. For the conflict between Lord Apellants and Richard II, see Nigel Saul, *The Three Richards: Richard I, Richard II and Richard III* (London: The Hambledon Press, 2005), 56-64.
[261] For the career of Philip Reyngdon who was "styled clericus specialissimus of Henry IV in May 1400" see A.B. Emden, *A Biographical Register of the University of Oxford to A.D. 1500, Vol: III* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959), 1565-1567.; and *Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae or A Calendar of the Principal Ecclesiastical Dignitaries in England and Wales, and of the Chief Officers in the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge* Vol II, ed. T. Duffus Hardy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1854), 16.

anticipated that all the negative aspects of Ricardian kingship, the "robbery, homicide, adultery, fornication, persecution of the poor, injury, injustice, and outrages of all kinds abound, instead of law, the will of the tyrant"[262] would be ended by promise of Bolingbroke for just kingship. For this reason, addressing Henry IV in his letter, Repyngdon says that

> We hoped that your miraculous entry to the kingdom of England, in which I have no doubt that God took a hand, would lead to the redemption of Israel, in other words to the correction of all the aforesaid evils and indignities towards God, 'for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well.' But now it is the wise who weep, and the depraved who laugh... at the time of your entry to the kingdom of England, all the people were clapping their hands and prasing God with one voice, and going forth, as the sons of Israel did to meet Christ on Palm Sunday, crying out to heaven for you, their anointed king, as if you were a second Christ... in the hope of good government for the kingdom. Now, however, 'my harp also is turned to mourning', joy has turned to bitterness, while evils multiply themselves everywhere, and hope of relief fades from the grieving hearts of men.[263]

For this reason, Repyngdon undertook the task of reminding the king of the duties, which were integral part of proper kingship, to solve the complaints of his subjects. Repyngdon's letter can be accepted as a sort of admonishment to Bolingbroke. For Repyngdon, Henry had made a covenant with God and his people to establish law and order in the realm. This was what Bolingbroke had to observe:

> ..._you, who promised to God and to the people, at the time of your return, to protect each and every person living in your kingdom, rich and poor, great and small, from their enemies. But the muttering of the people and the indignation of your irate God will not be silenced by means such as this; rather it will be roused to greater and greater fury, so that, when the oppurtunity arises, it will wreak vengeance, until such time as law and justice are respected in your kingdom, and evils, outrages, and oppressions of the poor of the kind mentioned above are eradicated and driven out by the proper application of law and justice, and to each person is restored what is his; thus may may peace be established, first between man and God, and thereafter between each

[262] *Usk*, 137.
[263] *Ibid.,*139.

> man and his neighbour, and may it be true peace, not merely a pretence.[264]

Repyngdon penned this letter on 4th May of 1401 calling himself a "supporter of the public good"[265] and of the realm of the king, to express his "deep anxiety about lawlessness and injustice in the country."[266] With regard to this expression of one of the most close friends of Henry IV, the ardent criticism for the king's governance might be offered as an illustration of not only the great expectations of the subjects from the Lancastrian Regime soon after the deposition of Richard II but also of a demonstration of the prevalent political and social discontent.[267] Indeed, Henry IV's government had to deal with a wide array of problems ranging from financial crisis to the opposition and the rebellions of his intimate supporters like the Percies as well as other domestic and foreign problems. This was in contrast to the expectations from the new king of both from the upper levels of the society and the common people.

Adam Usk included the complete letter in his chronicle. As it has been indicated above, this might be considered most vivid description of the true kingship in all the chronicles of the period. From historiographical point of view, the insertion of this letter into the chronicle of Adam of Usk incites the mind plainly to a puzzling and tricky question of whether this practice, quoting this source might be regarded as

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[264] *Ibid*., 141.
[265] *Ibid*., 143.
[266] *Ibid*.,141. From the internal evidence in the letter it can be understood that the letter was written by Philip Repyngdon. Repyngdon identifies himself as "ever your humble intercessor." As stated above, Repyngdon was the confessor of Henry IV. Full Latin text of the letter can also be seen in *Memorials of the Reign of King Henry VI: Official Correspondence of Thomas Bekynton, Secretary to King Henry VI.; and Bishop of Bath and Wells*, ed. George Williams (London: Longman, 1872), 151-152.
[267] For the most recent articles discussing the various sides of these problematic period especially look *The Reign of Henry IV: Rebellion and Survival, 1403-1413*, eds. Gwilym Dodd and Douglas Biggs (York: York Medieval Press, 2008).

characteristically a pattern or archetype for the kingship reflected through the eyes of a chronicler of Lancastrian period.[268]

It is true that Usk put this letter into his chronicle without making any reference to Repyngdon. He did not make any comment on the letter or touched upon its probable effect. He identified it as just a letter to the king. The letter occurs in the narrative at a somewhat later date than it had been actually written: between the dates of June 30 "when Lord George, earl of Dunbar in Scotland, became the liegeman of the king of England" and the 28th of the July when the wife of Richard II was sent back to France after the deposition and death of her husband.[269] Moreover, the connection between Adam of Usk and Philip Repyngdon is not very clear. At first sight, this supports the idea that the insertion of a letter by another person into the chronicle cannot be understood - and would be highly speculative - as reflecting the comprehensive opinion of Adam of Usk on kingship or as an original pattern for the understanding of general historiographical thought about it. However, when we consider the fact that Usk included some critical entries on Richard II in terms of the common good theme and he knew very well that the theoretical ideas, as it can be understood from its entry on the deposition of Frederick II, it is likely that this entry also represents his own views on Lancastrian kingship. Besides, this evidence overlaps with his critical accounts on the policies of Henry V, which will be discussed in the next chapter.

IV.5 Walsingham and Common Good as a Parliamentary Debate

Up to this point, I have discussed Usk's views on Lancastrian kingship within the framework of the principle of common good. Now, it is necessary to look at how the

[268] Quoting from various sources is a common practice in Usk's work. For example, see *Usk*, 72-74, 102-114.
[269] *Ibid.,* 135., and 143.

most comprehensive chronicle of the period, Walsingham's chronicle reflected Lancastrian policies. Although Walsingham's chronicle presents us with the fullest account of political events, especially for the reign of Henry IV, more than the other historical sources, it seems that he avoids articulating his ideas very explicitly about the kingly style of Bolingbroke and his son in terms of the theme of common good. Can this inadequacy be considered as a reflection of the so-called Lancastrian perspective of Walsingham? This point requires closer attention.

As the afore-mentioned examples from his chronicle on the reign of Richard II have shown, Walsingham made a precise distinction between a tyrannical king and a just king, who observed the common good of the realm. This notion is also very clearly propounded in his account of the reign of Edward III. Thomas Walsingham presents a clear outline about how the relationship of the king and his subjects should be. For Edward III, he says that "because he had been distinguished by complete integrity of character, under him to live was to reign, as it seemed to his subjects."[270] This indication for Edward III shows that Walsingham thought the true form of kingship as the fulfillment of the common interests of the subjects. However, apart from this, he does not give us a complete and clear expression of how he conceived the duties of the king for his realm and subjects. What Walsingham thought about this can be deduced from his negative representations about Ricardian kingship. In his chronicle, Walsingham records that during the Peasant's Revolt in 1381, the rebels complained about King Richard and his counsellors' "tyranny over the people...and their oppression of the commons and their witholding of pay to the poor and their servants."[271] In another account related to the execution of the Appellants,

[270] Cited in Watts, *Henry VI*, 30.
[271] *Chronica Maiora*, 132.

he writes that "the king began to tyrannise and burden his people with great loans."[272]

Walsingham completed his chronicle in the 1420s, when the Ricardian regime was still condemned as a despotic period in the English history. In this sense, his attack on Richard's governance is understandable. However, this does not mean that there is no reference to the Henrician style of kingship and the theme of common good. Despite the fact that existing accounts in Walsingham's chronicle do not explicitly criticise Henry's government or express a loss of hope after the usurpation, the emphasis on the necessity of observing the common good can be detected especially in his accounts of the parliament conventions. This point is interesting and related to the form of his chronicle. Unlike Usk's chronicle and the anonymous chroniclers on the reign of Henry IV, Walsingham's work heavily concentrates on the debates in the Parliament. The Parliament meetings since the reign of Edward III constitute much of his work. This was also the case for the reign of Henry IV. Formally, the reason for this fact is that Walsingham could reach the information about the central political events in London and the Parliament conventions mainly through the abbots of St. Albans. Abbots John Moot (until 1401) and William Heyworth (until 1417) regularly attended the Parliaments.[273] Therefore, it is possible to have some general grasp of how he underlined the theme of common good from his accounts on these parliament meetings. It should be indicated that for the reign of Henry IV, Walsingham's account focused on financial and religious issues especially, those about the Great Schism. As for the financial issues, they are the

[272] *The St.Albans Chronicle*, 61.
[273] Both Moot and Heyworth had very close relationships with Lancastrian dynasty. Moot attended the burial of Richard II. Bolingbroke gave the bishoprics of Coventary and Lichfield to Heyworth. Besides, Heyworth was one of the counsels of Bolingbroke after his ascension. See James G. Clark, *A Monastic Renaissance at St.Albans: Thomas Walsingham and His Circle c.1350-1440* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2004), 36.

reference points to see how Walsingham considered Bolingbroke's style of kingship in terms of the theme of common good. Besides, they are important to observe to what extent he was critical of the Lancastrian government.

It should be indicated firstly that financial precaution was integral element of good government. The close relationship between common good and private abuse and gain drew the line of demarcation between just government, which served the profit of the community, and the tyrannical diversions from true kingship. In this sense, the political stand taken by the king framed the boundaries of his legitimacy. The king had to give confidence to his subjects. As it has been indicated in the first part of this chapter, "it was part of a morality government which united the king and his subjects."[274] With regard to this fact, what Henry did when he came to England from exile was to promise that "there would be no lay or clerical taxation during his life time." But, shortly after his ascension, the critics of his government charged him with the heavy taxation and private abuses, as had been prevalent throughout the reign of Richard II.[275]

This theme becomes apparent in Walsingham's chronicle. Walsingham's account of the re-convention of the first Parliament on 14 October clearly portrays us the crisis of the Lancastrian regime in terms of the preservation of the common good and profit of his subjects. But, it also shows how he perceived the events. The 6 October Parliament of Henry IV reconvened on 14 October. This was to be the best attended parliament throughout the reign. The desire for the punishment of the evil counsellors of the Ricardian period, the correction of the misdeeds violating the basic rights of the individuals and re-establishment of the common good of the subjects

[274] Christian D. Liddy, *War, Politics and Finance in Late Medieval English Towns: Bristol, York and the Crown, 1350-1400* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2005), 33.
[275] James Sherborne "Perjury and the Lancastrian Revolution of 1399**"** in *War, Politics and Culture in Fourteenth-Century England*, ed. Anthony Tuck (London: The Hambledon Press, 1994), 131-155, at 134.

were the main issues of this parliament, which met just after the usurpation. In this sense, it can be said that the major issue of this parliament in a general sense was to eliminate "the maladies which infected the body politic during Richard's last years."[276]

Walsingham dedicated much space to this parliament meeting. Within the limits of our subject, the significance of this convention springs from the fact that it shows how the Commons propound their demands for the common good of the realm. As he narrated this parliament, Walsingham displayed his own consciousness about the responsibilities that the king had to fulfil. In this narrative, like his other accounts about the Parliament conventions and fiscal issues, Walsingham assumed an attitude independent from the Lancastrian central authority. According to Walsingham, the Commons gave petitions "for the good laws to be confirmed" by the parliament and "evil laws, which had been the order of the day up till then to be repealed".[277] The king was very positive to their request and "replied that he would gladly endorse and confirm the good laws and customs which they enjoyed in the times of his forebears."[278] Walsingham shows that Richard's style of kingship had been the core subject of criticism at the very beginning of Henry's first parliament. Walsingham's account can be taken as an example of his realisation of the limits of the king's actions within the general conventions and procedures. In doing so, Walsingham prefers to describe how the members of the Parliament wanted to orientate king's actions and decisions. Further, this entry illustrates the general conviction about the principle of common good and limits of the governmental mechanism.

[276] Wilson,"The Parliament of 1401," in *Parliament Rolls* (General Editor: Given-Wilson), 2005.
[277] *The St. Albans Chronicle*, 243.
[278] *Ibid*., 247.

It is very clear that Walsingham gives a quite different image of Henry IV when compared to his accounts on Richard II. For example, Walsingham says that although Bolingbroke as king "had full power to appoint" his son Henry as the Prince of Wales, "he did not wish to do this without the consent of his commons."[279] When their thoughts about this appointment were asked, the commons "consented to it, and cried aloud that it should be done."[280] As his reference to the good laws of the English kings before Richard II displays, Walsingham's account, at least for the early years of Bolingbroke, is consistent with the *Articles of Deposition*. As it can be seen in the *Articles*, which have been also touched upon above, there are several references to the former laws of England and practices of the kings for the protection of the common good of the people. Similar emphasis can be observed in Walsingham's work. For example, Walsingham writes that John Doreward, the speaker of the commons in the Parliament had presented a petition on the behalf of the commons and wanted that "liege subjects of the king should be permitted to be as free as they had been in the times of those of the king's forefathers who had ruled well."[281]

It can be observed that Walsingham does not maintain a critical attitude toward Henry IV, especially in his accounts of the early years of the king. The major reason for this diffidence does not come from Walsingham's Lancastrian point of view or propagandistic motivations. Like Philip Repyngdon, who expressed his expectations from new king for the establishment of the common good in the realm, Walsingham seems to have a strong belief that the new king would rule in a highly different manner as he had promised when he came to the throne. Thus, his account is a reflection of a popular idea about Lancastrian usurpation. According to

[279] *Ibid*., 243.
[280] *Ibid.,* 243.
[281] *Ibid*., 245.

Walsingham, Bolingbroke has acted as he had promised and approved all the petitions of the commons in October Parliament.[282] For Walsingham, Bolingbroke wanted to construct an amicable relationship with his subjects. He has wished "to please the commons in all matters."[283]

On the other hand, it is possible to see the comments of Walsingham about how the commons criticised the king for he acted against the wishes of his subjects on a number of points and violated the principle of the common good. For example, in Walsingham's account, the theme of the "counsel" appears as a theme drawing the borders for the king's free actions:

> The Commons again demanded that a general unrest should be made of persons, both churchmen and laity, well-known for the evil counsel they gave to King Richard. But, the fact that Henry did not execute the appelants of Richard and he just deprived them of their titles and rights resulted in a protest and uproar among the common people because some servants of the said-lords have submitted acts of burdensome exortion and injustice.[284]

Thus, we can easily detect from Walsingham's narrative that Henry was in great trouble. The entries which Walsingham put into his chronicle actually show that Henry IV was exposed to harsh criticism especially about financial matters. For example, the Parliament of 1401 is famous for its debates on taxation and conciliar appointments. The tax demands of the king for his household expenses and the campaign in Scotland were resisted in this Parliament. This campaign became a subject of political and financial crisis. Walsingham seems to support the Commons' criticisms. Walsingham says that the speaker of the Commons, Arnold Savage, "affirmed... so eloquently and so agreeably ...that the Parliament should not be weighed down in the future by taxation or tallage, that he earned the approval of the

[282] *Ibid*., 255.
[283] *Ibid*., 255.
[284] *Ibid*, 277.

whole parliament on that day."[285] The king took a defensive position in this parliament and accused some men around him of bad governance. Henry said that "they had secretly kept for themselves the gold and much of the jewellery."[286] Walsingham's entries on the financial issues certainly give the impression that he was disappointed with Lancastrian governance. For example, he points out that "grumbling broke out among the people against the king at this time, mainly because he received provisions but paid nothing for them."[287] In another entry about the Parliament of 1404, he says that several subjects were discussed, but "few statutes were passed that benefited the common people, despite the fact that the session had lasted twelve weeks."[288]

Given these, how should we evaluate Walsingham's entries on the Parliament debates over taxation within the theme of common good? What do they show us from an historiographical point of view? The fact that Walsingham often touches upon the taxation problem demonstrates how he perceived the Lancastrian government and kingship. This perception of Walsingham was shaped by both theoretical and practical concerns. The modern biographer of Walsingham, James Clark, has reviewed the books and other intellectual sources available at St.Albans. Clark points out that Walsingham did draw upon such political texts on kingship as the *Policraticus* of John of Salisbury and the *Secreta Secretorum*, which were widely read in medieval England. In addition, he claims that Walsingham's readings on Alexander the Great and the Trojan heroes were directly influenced by his search in

[285] *Ibid*., 309.
[286] *Ibid*., 309.
[287] *Ibid*., 315.
[288] *Ibid*., 393.

the classical texts for models of the good and bad kingship.[289] These examples demonstrate that, both as a chronicler and intellectual, Walsingham was profoundly aware of the theoretical notions of the nature of kingship and its duties like such asprotection of the common good of the subjects.

However, this theoretical consciousness did not solely determine Walsingham's text. His work was actually formed by the sources he had for his narrative. Thus, the stylistic formation of the work determined his reading of the actual political condition. As it has been indicated above, the abbots of the St.Albans were the oral sources for Walsingham. Besides, some copies of *Parliament Rolls* were put into archive in St.Albans monastery. Ready access to the primary sources made it easy for Walsingham to record the contemporary politics of the day.[290] This has led to Walsingham's motivation to tell the events in the form of what happened actually in the Parliament meetings. However, this does not mean that there was not a deliberate reason in Walsingham's mind to propound constantly the demands of the commons and criticise the over-taxation. There were two possible reasons for this. On the one hand, there was the practical fact that the Commons started more to intervene frequently in fiscal matters, especially during the fifteenth century. Therefore, the subjects of the king "claimed a role, not merely as individual creditors, but as representatives of the common good."[291] In this sense, the transformation of the fiscal issues into sharp political debates might have possibly influenced Walsingham's perspective.

On the other hand, the burden of taxation on the clergy possibly affected Walsingham' account since he himself was a monk. Thus why Walsingham did not

[289] Clark, *A Monastic Renaissance*, 259-262. There are not edited versions of Walsingham's studies on Alexander the Great and Trojan heros. Clark refers to some available manuscripts in British Library, which were written by Walsingham.
[290] Taylor, R. Childs and Watkiss, "Introduction" in *The St.Albans Chronicle*, Ixxii-Ixxx.
[291] Harris, *Shaping the Nation*, 65.

criticise Henrician government with reference to the protection of the common profit of the subjects becomes more understandable. At least for the very early period of Bolingbroke's rule, Walsingham showed his expectations from the king and portrayed him as a king who observed the common good of the people. This was in contrast to his comments on Richard II. In the light of the evidence above, it is apparent that theoretical and practical factors interwined with each other in Walsingham's entries on the themes of kingship and common good.

IV.6 Common Good and Chamber Scene in the *Eulogium*: A Deliberate Lancastrian Attack on Ricardian Kingship?

Apart from Usk and Walsingham's chronicles, the best extant accounts on the duties of the king to his subjects occur in the Continuation of the *Eulogium*. It is very clear that the author of the *Eulogium* hints at how he conceived the idea of kingship by constructing his own image of Richard II. Besides, these descriptions may be interpreted to some extent as indicating what the author expected from Henry IV since the work was compiled during his reign. In the entries on the reign of Richard II, the themes of kingship and common good are elaborated around the personal attributes and qualities of the king. In this respect, the most notable section of the *Eulogium*, which has been often referred to in modern accounts of the reigns of Richard II and Henry IV, is the so-called chamber scene. This short entry reads as follows:

> …And after this in the solemn days, in which he used/enjoyed the royalties/regalties by custom, the king ordered a throne in his chamber to be prepared for himself on which he used to sit displaying himself continuously from after dinner until vespers, talking to no one, but gazing at everyone. And when he looked at anyone, whatever position he had,that person had to genuflect.[292]

[292] *Eulogium*, 378. "Et post hoc rex in diebus solennibus in quibus utebatur de more regalibus jussit sibi in camera parari thronum, in quo post prandium se ostentans sedere solebat usque ad vesperas

At first sight, this short entry may be considered irrelevant to the main drift of this chapter, but, a brief discussion of this entry here is necessary for two reasons. On the one hand, as G.B. Stow has indicated, this passage has been generally taken at face value by modern scholars as a representation of tyrannical government of Richard II.[293] On the other hand, it has been commonly used to show the hostility of the compiler, from Lancastrian perspective, towards the Ricardian governance, in the sense that the king had violated the rights of his subjects and the principle of common good.[294] In this sense, it is accepted as a display of Lancastrian propaganda. Thus, an analysis of this scene is crucial for our argument that the existing accounts in the chroniclers cannot be merely regarded as a deliberate tool of Lancastrian legitimisation. The conventional approach of contemporary historiography about this scene can be criticised for two main reasons. Firstly, it should be mentioned that similar entries can be found in several chronicles of the period. Thus it is hard to evaluate such an entry as a representation of the Lancastrian point of view. Secondly, the *Eulogium* is full of explicit articulations of the dissatisfaction of Henry IV's subjects about the establishment of the common good in the realm although there was not any direct criticism of Henry's personal attributes.

For the first point, it is necessary to look at the other chroniclers of the Ricardian period. For example, *Henry Knighton's Chronicle* contains an account very similar to the entry in the Continuation of the *Eulogium*. When the archbishop of Canterbury and the lords came to Westminster on the 17th of November in 1387,

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nulli loquens sed singulos aspiciens. Et cum aliquem respiceret, cujus cumque gradus fuerit, opurtuit ipsum genuflectere."

[293] G.B. Stow, "Richard II in the Continuatio Eulogii: Yet Another Alleged Historical Incident?," in Fourteenth *Century England V*, ed. Nigel Saul (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2008), 116-129; at 117. Stow makes a detailed analysis of the scene for other reasons in his article. I wanted to make a brief discussion of it since the scene is concerned with the common good theme of this chapter.

[294] This view is dominant in R.H. Jones, *The Royal Policy of Richard II: Absolutism in the Later Middle Ages* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1968).

they "saluted him on bended knee …And he beckoned them with his hand to come up…and for a third time knelt and they saluted him."[295] So, a negative opinion in the continuator's mind cannot be hastily inferred from the text by looking at contrasting chamber accounts in these two chronicles. Similarities of the scenes described in the *Eulogium* and the other chronicles, including the *Westminster Chronicle* and the *Anonimalle Chronicle* force us to reconsider the issue. The *Westminster Chronicle* gives an account of a meeting of the Archbishop of Canterbury with Richard II in the October of 1385.

> Through the good offices of the bishop of London the archbishop of Canterbury was reconciled with the king on 23 October. In his lust for glory and his eagerness to have from everybody the deference properly due to his kingship, the king allowed the archbishop to kneel before him to beg his pardon.[296]

The chronicler touches upon Richard's strong desire for power and respect, and indicates that the archbishop did not kneel because "according to the canonical rule it is rather the necks of kings and princes which should be bowed in submission at the feet of pontiffs."[297] However true it may be that the chronicler wrote this to emphasize the superiority of religious authority upon the secular; he seems to have accepted implicitly the desire of Richard for "deference" by regarding this as an intrinsic component of "his kingship." Similarly, the *Anonimalle Chronicle* gives an earlier example. The chronicle mentions that Richard's father, Edward the Black Prince had, in some cases required "his nobles to wait days for an audience for him and when he deigned to admit them, they were required to kneel before him, perhaps

[295] *Knighton's Chronicle 1337-1396*, ed, and trans. G.H. Martin (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 426-427.
[296] *The Westminster Chronicle*, 138-139.
[297] *Ibid*., 138-139.

for hours."[298] This is similar to a continental example, French chronicler Jean Froissart's depiction of the entrance of the Duke of Britanny into the presence of French king, Charles VI.

> The moment the Duke of Brittany entered the room, way was made for him, and an opening formed to the king, by the lords falling on each side. When in the presence, he dropped on one knee, but speedily arose, and advanced about ten or twelve paces, when he again kneeled…, kneeled the third time…when the duke had risen, he bowed to all the princes present, one after the other, and stood opposite to the king without saying a word; but the king never took his eyes off him.[299]

The parallel reading of these quotations, related to the kneeling of the subjects or the representation of gathering in the princely court, in completely distinct contexts, may lead to a different conclusion as far as the representation of Richard II in the *Eulogium* is concerned. The depiction of the scene in the *Eulogium* is not unusual. The Continuator tries to display continuity in terms of the established notions for the image of kingship while at the same time expressing the new attitudes of kingly practices and representations.

The Continuator's depiction of the chamber scene is compatible with what Nigel Saul indicated: "All over Europe rulers were seeking to distance themselves more from their subjects and dependants."[300] This situation also motivated new courtly styles pervading in the late medieval courts of France or Luxemburg. In this process, the kings re-emphasized "the local and national roots of their power."[301] For example, in Capetian France, these practices developed "by the propagation of

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[298] Cited from David Green, *Edward the Black Prince: Power in Medieval Europe* (Edinburgh: Pearson, 2007), 135.
[299] Jean Froissart, ed.and trans. Thomas Johnes, *Chronicles of England, France, Spain and the Adjoining CountriesVol:II* (London: William Smith, 1839), 345.
[300] Nigel Saul, "The Kingship of Richard II," in *Richard II* eds. Goodman and James Gillespie, 37-59.
[301] *Ibid*., 37-59.

theories claiming ever greater status or authority for a king" by the reformulations and re-definitions of the lawyers.[302] Richard II's position was part of this development. Without giving details, it should be summarized that during his reign, Richard II employed various devices such "the rituals, icons and other "visible signs of his earthly power."[303] Richard's main purpose was to enforce his position against the nobility and to secure the obedience of his subjects.[304] So, symbolic and literary elements have been used to highlight the image of kingship. These were changing from the underlining of the dynastic cults of Edward the Confessor to the employment of the language and expressions like "Royal Highness" or "Royal Majesty" to stress the royal prerogative.[305]

Although the Continuator's brief treatment of Richard II's relationship with his subjects in the chamber scene at first sight gives the impression of his critical approach to the kingship, the consistency in the language and narration of the kingship with earlier examples in terms of symbolic and ritualistic expression of the majesty of the king, should be articulated. The *Eulogium*'s chamber scene follows formal ritual practices narrated by earlier histories. In another context, Robert Bartlett has drawn attention to the crown-wearing practices and evaluates these kinds of "special occasions" as "ritual formality" in which "the king wore his crown and displayed himself crowned in public splendour."[306] A quotation from William of Malmesbury explicitly present the continuity with the *Eulogium*'s scene: "… the leading men came to his [William's] court to discuss the business of the realm and at

[302] Green, *Edward*, 135-136.
[303] Helen Barr, *Socio-Literary Practice in Late Medieval England*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 63.
[304] Saul, "Kingship," 37-59.
[305] Nigel Saul, "Richard II and the Vocabulary of Kingship." *English Historical Review 438* (1995), 854-877. Lynn Staley, *Languages of Power in the Reign of Richard II* (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania University Press, 2005), 165-265.
[306] Robert Bartlett, *England Under the Norman and Angevin Kings, 1075-1225* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 127.

the same time to see the glory of the king, as he went about exalted by his bejewelled diadem."[307]

The afore-mentioned discussion of the *Eulogium* both in late medieval context and in terms of continuity seems to contradict the general conviction that the *Eulogium*'s narrative was Lancastrian propaganda to show Richard's violation of the principle of common good. So, should we consider the chamber scene given in the *Eulogium* as just a later textual interpolation? Or does it merely display the criticism brought against the Ricardian kingship? However, the later interpolation of the text does not necessarily mean that it should be regarded solely as a representation of anti-Ricardian hostility or just a negation of the kingship of the deposed king, Richard II. Actually, to determine the real intention of the author here is surely very difficult. However, when it has been evaluated in its historical context and read together with the representations in the earlier sources it seems that it may be read as both later interpolation along with anti-Ricardian, and pro-Lancastrian propaganda, and a real scene put into writing by an author, who used to see the ceremonial and symbolic representations of kingship. In this sense, the scene in the *Eulogium* should be reconsidered, on the one hand, in the network of the interaction of the socio-political developments with their reflections on the language and narration in the historical-writing and, on the other hand, as a restatement and re-narration of the former ritual practices and views on kingship, not as merely Lancastrian propaganda against Ricardian kingship.

[307] Cited in Bartlett, ibid. 128. William of Malmesbury, *Vita Wulfstani*, ed. R.R. Darlington in Camden Society 3rd. Series (London: Camden Society, 1928), 32.

IV.7 The *Eulogium* and Common Good during the Reign of Henry IV

When look at the entries in the *Eulogium* for the Lancastrian period, there is no direct criticism of Bolingbroke's personal attributes. The entries are mostly concerned with bad governance and the disappointment of his subjects. In this sense, they remind us of Repyngdon's letter quoted in Usk's chronicle. On the other hand, the *Eulogium*'s entries on the theme of common good formally resemble Walsingham's accounts on the Parliamentary debates about taxation. Similarly, its entries evolve around the financial burden imposed upon the subjects. When compared to the accounts of any other chronicle of the period, they are really so explicit that it shows us once again that there was no reason to consider the *Eulogium* as a Lancastrian propagandistic text.

As discussed above, Henry IV's promise to be a different king from Richard II and his constructive language for Lancastrian kingship in contrast to Ricardian extravagance collapsed in the eyes of his subjects in a short time when he constantly demanded new taxes both for his own household and expeditions in Wales and Scotland. The discontent caused by financial burden has often been articulated in the *Eulogium*. For example, in an entry for the year of 1399, the chronicler writes that

> Thus the king sent a message to the people of London, requesting them to lend him gold. However, they came to him to ask whether this message issued from his own will, reminding him how he himself had promised to abstain from loans and tallages of this kind. He said in response that he utterly needed money and had to take it from them in this way. All these happened in the first year of this king and the 22nd year of Richard, in A.D. 1399.[308]

[308] *Eulogium*, 387. Tunc Rex missit Londoniensibus ut aurum sibi mutuarent. Ipsi autem ad eum accesserunt quarentes an ipsa missio de voluntate sua processit, referentes quomodo ipse promisit se ab hujusmodi mutuis et tallagiis abstinere; qui eis respondens dixit se omnino egere et pecuniam ab eis tunc habere oportere. Haec omnia facta sunt anno primo Regis hujus et anno xxij. Ricardi, et anno domini 1399.

The Londoners' complaint in this entry is almost exactly the same as criticisms of Ricardian kingship. Besides, it is important because it refers to Henry's promise about good governance and proper taxation. The date for this entry is the year when Henry IV came to the throne and two years before Repyngdon's letter. This example does not merely display the controversy around finance but also is evidence of the fact that the criticism against Ricardian kingship -- for he violated the principle of common good -- had turned into a criticism of Lancastrian kingship. Another entry from the *Eulogium* supports this view. When the king demanded a new tax in the Parliament of 1404 for his internal and external expeditions, the lords drew attention to the heavy taxes under the reign of Richard II and warned Henry IV.

> In this year the clergy of England conceded to the king, who was asking for it, the half of a tithe. After the feast of Saint Hilary the parliament was launched, and lasted until the Easter, for the king demanded a a great tallage, saying that he had war on his hands with the Welsh, Scottish and Irish as well as with the French in Gascony; moreover, the custody of Calais and the English Channel was also a heavy burden. The assembly said in response: "these people are not disturbing England so much. Even if they disturbed, the king still has all the revenues of the Crown and the duchy of Lancaster, as well as the thelonia that were raised in a notably excessive manner by King Richard."[309]

As indicated above, these entries reflect the popular opinion and expectations from Henry IV. Unlike Richard, "who was represented in the deposition articles as an exploitative and extravagant king,"[310] Henry had increased expectations, which were very ordinary and conventional thought for his subjects, for "competent financial managament on the part of the Crown."[311] It is obvious that the accounts

[309] *Ibid*., 399. "Hoc anno clerus Angliae concessit Regi petenti medietatem unius decimae. Post festum Sancti Hilarii inceptum est parliamentum, et duravit usque ad Pascha, quia Rex exigebat magnum tallagium, dicens se habere bellum cum Wallicis, Scotis, Hibernicis, et Gallicis in Vasconia; insuper custodia Calesiae magna fuit et Maris Anglicicani. Communitas respondit dicens quod "isti non inquietant Angliam multum. Et si inquietarent, adhuc Rex habet omnes proventus coronae, ducatus Lancstriae, ac thelonia notabiliter excessive elevate per regem Ricardum,.."
[310] Nuttall, *Creation*, 76.
[311] *Ibid*., 76.

including the criticism directed against Henry IV focuses on both his promise to his subjects, the violation of the common good principle and bad governance. As it has been illustrated from the other chronicles above, these themes are common characteristics of all the chronicles of the period.

What is one of the most striking points in the *Eulogium* is that the compiler connects the public discontent to the problem of Lancastrian legitimacy. According to the author, in the third year Henry, "the people began to be upset with the king and they wished for Richard II since they claimed that Bolingbroke seized their goods and did not pay them."[312] This shows that the legitimacy of Lancastrian kingship was actually constructed on the principle of the common good, which had been frequently violated by Richard II. In doing this, the author actually reflects both his own and public opinion.

As striking evidence for this, it is possible to examine another entry in the chronicle, relating to the rebellion of Richard Scrope, the Archbishop of York, against Henry IV. The legitimacy and the theme of common good are linked in Archbishop Scrope's *Manifesto*, which was hung on the gate of the Church in York, dated 1405. It is well-known that Archbishop Scrope, one of the supporters of Lancastrian usurpation, rebelled against Henry IV with other leading magnates of the period including Thomas Mowbray, the earl of Nottingham, but, his rebellion was quashed, and he was executed.[313]

The charges against Henry, included in this *Manifesto*, take up much space in both Walsingham's chronicle and the *Eulogium*. These entries clearly increase doubts about the questionable argument that the chroniclers were written with

[312] *Eulogium*, 389. "… populus coepit Regem graviter fere et Regem Ricardum desiderare, quia dicebant quod ipse cepit bona eorum et non solvebat."
[313] For Scrope's rebellion, see Douglas Biggs, "Archbishop Scrope's Manifesto of 1405: Naive Nonsense or Reflections of Political Reality," *Journal of Medieval History 33* (2007), 358-371.

propagandistic purposes. On the other hand, the evidence supports my argument that the content of the chronicles were in several cases determined by the sources they have used for their narratives. Walsingham's words confirm both of these assertions. Walsingham does not use pejorative words for Scrope. Conversely, he says that "well-known godliness of the archbishop" caused the popular support behind his cause. He further writes that "according to the reports of some he died a glorious and worthy martyr."[314]

This is further evidence of how Walsingham based his narrative on his various sources. Walsingham indicates that he translated the articles of Scrope's *Manifesto* from English into Latin since it was right to put them into the chronicle.[315] The articles both in Walsingham and the *Eulogium* are almost same. They possibly depend on the same documents such as Scrope's *Manifesto*. They reflect Scrope's criticism of Henrician governance and reflect again the general perception of the link between Henry's promise for the good government and his legitimacy. One example from the *Eulogium* displays this clearly.

> The archbishop, having taken counsel with wise men, preached in the cathedral church of York. He exhorted the people to assist in the correction of the bad government of the kingdom, namely the impoverishment of the merchants, who ought to hold substantial riches of the kingdom between themselves, but who were rendered miserable through excessive raises in theolonia and customs as well as through confiscations of their properties. He demanded that the debts for victuals and products of handiwork be paid, that the clergy and the people be relieved of that habitual burden of unsupportable tallages, and that the inheritances be restituted whole to the heirs of nobility, along with those honors in keeping with their status by birth.[316]

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[314] *The St. Albans Chronicle*, 441.
[315] *Ibid*., 443.
[316] *Eulogium*, 405. Archiepiscopus, communicato cum prudentibus, praedicavit in ecclesia cathedrali Eborum, hortans populum ut assiteret ad correctionem mali regiminis regni, ut scilicet depauperatio mercatorum, in quibus esse deberent substantiales divitae regni, per excessivas elevationes theoleneorum et custumarum, ac confiscationes pecuniarum suarum sub colere mutui. Et quod pro victualibus et artificiis debitae solutiones fiant. Et quod relevetur clerus et populus ab illo assueto onere importabilium tallagiorum. Et quod haeredibus nobilium restituantur haereditates integrae et honores secundum conditionem natalium suorum.

It should be indicated that the author of the *Eulogium* expanded his account in a reference to the evil counsellors of Henry IV. This account, which was attributed to Scrope, resembles very much in content the accusations brought against Richard II in the *Articles of the Deposition*, which has been illustrated above. Besides, the author uses the notion of the common good in a much more explicit way than the other chroniclers. According to the author, Scrope demanded that "the greedy and avaricious counselors around the king, who sucked away from him the properties intended for the common good and enriched themselves, be removed."[317]

All these examples show that the *Eulogium* contains highly critical entries about Henry IV's style of kingship. Its accounts directly connect the Lancastrian legitimacy to the principles of common good and good governance. In this sense, its content from the Ricardian period until 1413, when the chronicle ends, has an apparent continuity about the expectations from a king. Although the *Eulogium* was possibly compiled in Canterbury, where Lancastrian Thomas Arundel was Archbishop, the narrative is precisely independent of any direct influence or interference from Lancastrian government.

IV.8 "Common Good" in the London Chronicles, the Brut and An English Chronicle

Similar examples, though not frequently, can be found in the annalistic chronicles of the period. However, they do not include very obvious descriptions about the governance of Lancastrian kings. The problematic nature of both the *Brut* and *London chronicles* has been discussed in the introduction and the third chapter of this thesis. Since they are compiled by various unknown writers, their basic motivations

[317] *Ibid*., 406.Consiliarii avari et cupidi circa regem sugentes ab eo bona ad commune subsidium ordinata, semetipsos ditantes, amoveantur.

cannot be determined very exactly. As it has been underlined in the previous chapters, both works are most important sources, in some respects, for the reign of Henry IV and were circulated very widely throughout the fifteenth century. However, they do not provide us with a clear representation about how the anonymous compilers of the period saw Bolingbroke's kingship with reference to the common good of the realm.

This point is important because the main body of the *Brut* chronicle for the period from 1377 (the date of Edward III's death) to 1419 had been compiled under Lancastrian rule in the 1420s and 1430s. In the entries of the chronicle concerned with Edward III and Richard II, there are very obvious expressions about what the king's duties for his subjects should be. Moreover, they give us some idea about what the compilers of the two chronicles anticipated from the kings for the common good of the realm. With regard to this fact, there are incompatible representations of both Edward III and Richard II. For example, the *Brut* writes of Edward III that "he was treteable & and wele avysed in temperall & worldly nedes, wyse in counsell, and discrete, soft, meke, & good to speke with."[318] For the chronicler, it was very obvious that "... he gourned gloriously hys kyngdom into his age."[319]

However, this is not to say that the chronicler was totally positive about the kingly style of Edward. The chronicler points out in his entry about the Good Parliament of 1376 that, when Edward wanted money for the defence of the realm, the commons replied that "þey were so oft, day be day, ygreud & and charged wiþ so many talyagez & subsidies, þat þey myghte no longer suffre non such berþes no charges."[320] This entry resembles the entries of Walsingham and the compiler of the *Eulogium* about Henry IV's financial problems and the discourses of the leading

[318] *Brut*, 333.
[319] *Ibid*., 334.
[320] *Ibid*., 329.

critics of his kingship with reference to his promise when he came to the throne. In the *Brut*, similar criticisms, with more pejorative language, are dominant for the kingship of Richard II. In this sense, the chronicler represents Richard as an inefficient king, who violated the rights of his subjects and the common profit of the realm. He refers constantly to the actions of the king and "his Counsel" as the great evil for England.[321] Unlike these representations of Edward III and Richard II, the *Brut* does not criticise the kingship of Bolingbroke within the scope of the common good of the realm. With regard to this, two facts attract attention. On the one hand, although the *Brut* gives some information on the discontent and rebellions of the people against Henry's government, they do not give any sort of negative implication of Henry IV's governance. Conversely, it writes somewhere in the text about "þe gode governance & þe condicionez our peple"[322] in England. On the other hand, the part of the chronicle related to the reign of Henry IV is very short when compared to those on the other kings, both Henry IV's predecessors and the other Lancastrian kings after him. It is therefore difficult to detect a clear image of Bolingbroke in the text. So, how should we evaluate this material?

The entries on the governance of the kings before Henry IV are generally compatible with the popular opinion of the kingly styles of both Edward III and Richard II. For example, when the *Parliament Rolls* about the Good Parliament (a short explanation about the Good Parliament have been already done in the second chapter) are scrutinised, it can be easily seen that the *Brut*'s entries reflect historical events according to the available sources they could reach. Besides, it should be indicated that as demonstrated in the previous chapter, eye-witness accounts and hearsay have determined the narrative construction of the *Brut*. In this sense, the

[321] *Ibid*., 346 - 351.
[322] *Ibid*., 364.

negative or critical approaches towards former kings show us what the contemporary late medieval view was about the proper application of kingship for the common good of the people in the realm.

In addition, the lack of criticism about Bolingbroke's kingship or the scarcity of the emphasis for the discontent of the people with Henry IV's governance cannot be read as a reflection of the Lancastrian point of view. In fact, the annalistic form of the *Brut* chronicle fails to have a fuller view of the compilers about some important issues in the work. The existing entries are very short and lack substantial comments. This is very obvious when compared to the chronicles of Usk or Walsingham, which were motivated and shaped precisely by the personal intentions and interests of these historians. As mentioned in the former chapters, the purpose of the *Brut* tradition in the vernacular language was to serve as a popular historical source for both information and entertainment of the readers. It was not designed as a comprehensive source for the reign of a single king and was not patronised by Lancastrian kings. In this sense, the pejorative entries on Richard II or the shortness of the sections on Henry IV, and the lack of criticism of Henry's kingship, do not spring from an attempt to legitimise the dynasty. Besides, it must be underlined that those parts relating to Bolingbroke's reign were compiled during the reigns of Henry V and his son Henry VI, though they were not written under the direct patronage of these kings. Therefore, the compilers of such a popular work might possibly have abstained from entries implying a direct criticism of the founder of Lancastrian dynasty.

Similar entries especially for the reigns of pre-Lancastrian kings can also be observed in *An English chronicle*, which is a separate chronicle in the *Brut* tradition. (Some details about its composition were given in the previous chapters, also be

debated in the introduction chapter). Like the *Eulogium*, which was one of the main sources for the narrative of the chronicle, the chronicler especially emphasised the discontent of the people about the Ricardian regime within the theme of good governance. For example, the chronicler writes that when Richard II had demanded money "forto mayntene" his estate, this caused "grete noissaunce & and grevaunce off the peple."[323] Such entries about the discontent of people about the regime are not specifically about Richard's reign. They can be at the same time observed in the chronicles for the reign of Henry IV.

Parallel to this fact, the chronicler draws attention to the dissatisfaction of the people with Henry's financial constraints. In the entry for the third year of the reign of Henry IV's reign, when Philip Repyngdon wrote his letter to the king, the chronicler indicates that "the peple off þis londe began forto groche agaynes Kynge Henry and bere hym hevy because he toke þeire godez and payed not therfor..."[324] The compiler of *An English Chronicle* for the Lancastrian period is, in many senses, far from being a Lancastrian historian. His narrative keeps a distance from all the kings narrated in his chronicle until the latter parts, written under the Yorkist influence. Even it can be claimed that he tacitly implies the failure of Henry IV's kingship in various parts of the chronicle. From his critical point of view, the chronicler has gone further than the *Brut* chronicle. The critical entries on the kingly style of Bolingbroke come from the fact that the compiler drew upon the *Eulogium* as another source for his narrative as afore-mentioned example demonstrates. However, it must be pointed out that the compiler uses a softer language than the language of the compiler of the *Eulogium*.

[323] *An English Chronicle*, 29.
[324] *Ibid*, 9.

The content of the various manuscripts of the *London Chronicles* include similar references to good rule of a king. For example, all of the *Articles of Deposition* are quoted in some of these manuscripts.[325] For the London chroniclers, Richard II was a representative of "euyll gouernance in yevyng a way to vnworthy persons the goodes and possessions longyng to his Crovne..."[326] However; we cannot see any sort of reference to the discontent of the people under the reign of Henry IV. Like the *Brut* and *An English Chronicle*, the purpose of the London chroniclers and the conditions in which they worked may have determined this. The occurance of the *Articles of Deposition* in the *London Chronicles* is understandable. It was perhaps the most significant document for the Lancastrian usurpation. It was well-recorded and circulated throughout England. So, the London chroniclers considered this document worth inserting into their compilations. However, it would be argued that the lack of reference to the Henrician governmental style is explained by what it has been asserted for the *Brut*. The London chroniclers wrote in annalistic form, as brief entries. Their particular attention focused on the issues which they regarded as the most important for their narrative. They used documents or other primary sources according to their particular attention. Lastly, it should be underlined again that they were mostly compiled under the reign of Lancastrian kings. But, this does not necessarily mean that the compilers of the *London Chronicles* and the *Brut* were totally oblivious to the governmental style of the kings. As it is presented before, the manuscripts in the *Brut* tradition, though in a limited sense, touch upon the characteristics of good kingship and the preservation of common good. This can also be detected in the entries of the *London Chronicles* and the *Brut*, particularly about

[325] See *The Great Chronicle of London*, 51-83. *Chronicles of London*, 19-62.
[326] *Ibid*., 24.

the reign of Henry VI - which will be shown in the next chapter, when they started to write under the Yorkist influence.

CHAPTER V

THE PRINCIPLE OF "COMMON GOOD" IN THE CHRONICLES WRITTEN DURING THE REIGNS OF HENRY V AND HENRY VI

V.1 Introduction

This chapter will be a continuation of the previous chapter and will be devoted to discussion of how the chroniclers written during the reigns of Henry V and Henry VI approached the theme of "common good." For the reign of Henry V, I am going to analyse the entries in Walsingham's chronicle, which give the most detailed account of the period as well as other sources such as Adam Usk's chronicle, the *Brut* and the *London Chronicles*, to which I referred frequently in the previous chapter. In addition to these, I will specifically discuss the entries in the anonymous chronicles such as the *Gesta Henrici Quinti* and Thomas Elmham's *Liber Metricus*, which may also be regarded as the biographical accounts of Henry V. As for the reign of Henry VI, the evidence in the most comprehensive chronicles of this time, such as *An English Chronicle*, *Gregory's Chronicle* and *John Hardyng's Chronicle* will be touched upon.

This chapter will argue that in the case of Henry V, while major chronicle sources like Elmham's *Liber Metricus* and the *Gesta Henrici Quinti* represent him as a king concerned for the well-being of his subjects, in the other sources such Usk's

and Walsingham's chronicles -though occasionally- there are some anxieties and warnings, which I term covert criticism of Henry's kingship in terms of the principle of common good. Secondly, the chapter will show how the general notion of common good, which marked the observation of the rights of the subjects and maintaining peace and justice in the realm, for the chronicles of both Henry IV and Henry V, transformed into the settled concept of "common weal" during the later years of Henry VI when the political society expanded, including different sections of society and when the subjects began to articulate their oppositions to the governmental style of the king.

V.2 Henry V and Covert Criticism of Lancastrian Kingship

When looked at the chronicles of the reign of Henry V, they commonly show a positive attitude towards Henry's governance from the perspective of the common good, although some of them, such as Usk's chronicle contain occasional entries implying criticism especially of Henry's financial policies. The optimism and legendary representations of the good rule of Henry V in the later accounts, particularly the Tudor accounts, did not appear from nowhere.[327] Rather, they were based upon the chronicle writing of Henry V's reign. It must be indicated that the

[327] My subject here is not to make a discussion of the Tudor interpretation of Lancastrian dynasty. But, something should be said about the perceptions of Tudor historians on Henry V because the writings of the historians of the sixteenth century were the historical sources for Shakespeare and the created image of Henry V in their works directly formed the conventional perception which has gradually developed in time and is still common in the popular mind. The reason for this may be the fact that the new Tudor dynasty constantly negated the period of the Wars of the Roses as I indicated in the second chapter. From the Lancastrian kings, only Henry V's image served as an embodiment of ideal kingship because of his internal and external achievements. For instance, historian of Tudor period, Edward Hall starts the part of history for the reign of Henry V with the sub-title of "Victorious Actes of Kyng Henry the Fifth". *Hall's Chronicle*, 46. Another historian of the sixteenth century Richard Grafton writes that "This Prince was the noblest king that euer reigned ouer the realme of England." See *Grafton's Chronicle; or History of England in Two Volumes Vol: I* (London: Longman, 1809), 548. It should be noted that the fifteenth century chronicles were the major sources of Tudor historians. For example, Thomas Walsingham's *Chronica Maiora* was edited in 1574 by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Matthew Parker, who was also a great antiquarian. See Levy, *Tudor*, 120. For Tudor perceptions of Henry V, particularly see Keith Dockray, *Henry V* (Stroud: Tempus, 2004), 45-50.

successful expeditions of Henry V in France, and relatively domestic stability throughout his reign, contributed to a construction of an uncritical representation and reflection of Henry V's governance. On the other hand, the chronicle writing was not independent of Henry's court. Unlike the chroniclers of his father's reign, two important chroniclers of his period, the anonymous author of the chronicle, *Gesta Henrici Quinti* and the author of the *Liber Metricus*, Thomas Elmham, both had very close relationships with the court. Thus, both texts present the perfect image of the just ruler, who observed the common good in the realm. This image would also influence the great modern historian of the fifteenth century, McFarlane, who stated that "take him all round and he was, I think, the greatest man that ever ruled England." [328]

The author of the *Gesta* was a royal chaplain in the household of Henry V. His purpose in writing is not clear because he does not explicitly state his intention. However, the fact that he emphasized the religiosity of Henry V and the existence of constant references to the war against France lead us to think that his audience was mainly the king and his close retinue. In addition, there is no evidence for the wide circulation of this work: there are just two known surviving copies of this work. On the other hand, Thomas Elmham, the other eulogistic biographer of Henry V, was a Cluaniac prior of the Lenton Priory in Nottinghamshire. He dedicated his work to Henry V and Henry called him "capellanus noster" in a letter written to the abbot of Cluny in 1414.[329] His *Liber Metricus* was widely circulated and copied when

[328] McFarlane, *Lancastrian Kings*, 133. The twentieth-century historian McFarlane's comment on Henry V is very similar to that of sixteenth century historian Richard Grafton, which I have illustrated above. This similarity is very interesting in that it helps us to see the continuity in the perception of Henry V. The image of Henry V, as ideal king, who always observed the common good principle, has still been dominant view in modern historiography. For a recent and relatively balanced assessment of Henry's kingship. See John Matusiak, *Henry V* (New York: Routledge, 2013).
[329] Gransden, *Historical Writing*, 206.

compared to the *Gesta* throughout the fifteenth century: it had nine extant fifteenth century manuscripts.[330]

Owing to the fact the authors of these two chronicles were very close to the Lancastrian court, even though there is no evidence that they were written under the patronage of Henry V himself, it is not possible to see any criticism of Henry V in these texts. Both works are full of details about Henry's campaign in France, and the heroic image of Henry V. Apart from these two texts, a minor chronicle of the period, John Strecche's chronicle, which was written in an annalistic form with very brief entries, does not present us any evidence for a discussion of the problem of good governance. In addition to these works, Walsingham - the best chronicle telling the details of Henry V's time -, Usk and the other chronicles such as the *Brut*, *An English Chronicle*, the *London Chronicles* and which have continuations until the end of Henry V's reign, are likewise generally not critical of the kingly style of Henry. However, some doubts and critical implications of Henry V's governance and discontent with his fiscal policy can be inferred from the texts. These points require attention since they are the significant aspects of common good principle and proper application of kingship.

Before passing on the discussion and illustration of the existing material in the chronicles on the discontents about Henry V's policies, it is precisely crucial to see how the chroniclers had some anxieties and doubts about Henry V when he came to the throne. Why they had similar entries on this requires attention since they were implicitly referring to the anxieties and uncertainties about whether the new king would maintain the public order and would observe the principle of common good. The evidence for this issue can be observed in the chronicles' accounts relating to the

[330] Anne Currry, *The Battle of Agincourt: Sources and Interpretation* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2000), 41.

coronation day of Henry V. The disappointing rule of his father, Henry IV, in terms of the observation of the common good of the subjects was an accepted fact. This point has already been discussed in the previous chapter with reference to the accounts in the chronicles of Henry IV's reign. Undoubtedly, there were very high expectations following the death of a failed king. In this sense, the situation was very similar to that when Richard had been deposed.

The hopes and optimism for Henry V's rule after the death of his father were quite sensible because it would mark a new period, but they were not free from apprehension and doubts as stated above. The chronicles of the period reflected these anxieties by reporting the occurance of a bad weather, a portentous sign, open to further interpretation, on the coronation day of Henry V. For instance, Walsingham reports that there was a heavy snow in the coronation day of the new king. The reports of bad weather were also recorded by other chroniclers such as Strecche and Usk. For example, Usk records that the coronation day of Henry V "was marked by unprecedented storms, with driving snow which covered the country's mountains, burying men and animals and houses…"[331]

With regard to these entries, it is necessary to ask why almost all chroniclers of the period told about this bad weather condition and why they used this portent to narrate the coronation day of Henry V. On the one hand, the chroniclers' attitude could be evaluated as merely recording the facts. On the other hand, it could be read as a reflection of another valid reason. Before the accession to the throne, Henry V had very troubled relations with his father, Henry IV. The origin of this problem can

[331] *Usk*, 243. Additionally, John Strecche mentions in his chronicle about the same fact. He writes that the bad weather, the storm was worse than any other example since the days of King Lear. *Strecche*, 147. "Verumtamen in die coronacionis Henrici regis Vet per dues dies continue sequentes nix cum grandine ita cecidit et copia tanta pluviarum quanta vel qualis a diebus Leyer." Frank Taylor ed., "The Chronicle of John Strecche for the Reign of Henry V (1414-1422)," *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library 16* (1932), 137-187.

be traced back to 1406 when Prince Hal became one of the members of Henry IV's royal council. After this time, he increased his power in the state affairs and clashed with his father's chancellor Thomas Arundel because of the government's non-aggressive policy against the French especially after his father's illness.[332] Apart from Walsingham, the chronicles do tell almost nothing about Henry V's active policy against Henry IV and his men.

Walsingham includes an open letter by Prince Hal, sent to different parts of the realm in 1412. According to this letter, there was a rumour that Henry V would depose his father "with the violent support of the people." But, the Prince refuted this claim in this letter by saying that this rumour was produced by "the certain children of iniquity".[333] This letter obviously reveals that there was a political crisis in 1412 just before Henry IV's death.[334] From an historiographical point of view, it presents that though it is evident that there were no explicit references to the relations between Prince Hal and his father in the other chronicles, Walsingham's detailed discussion of the issue in his chronicle and the portentous description of the coronation day suggest that the essential question in the minds of everybody was if the new king's government would maintain the order and observe the common good principle.

Additionally, the emphasis on bad weather in the chronicles should be regarded as an example of the often used medieval narrative topos. Portents were used by the medieval chroniclers for various reasons. In some cases, the medieval chroniclers used them as explanations for the events which had already happened, or

[332] For Henry IV's illness and its effects on the politics of time. Peter McNiven, " The Problem of Henry IV's Health, 1405-1413," *English Historical Review* 100 (1985), 747-772.
[333] *The St.Albans Chronicle*, 614.
[334] Peter McNiven, "Prince Henry and the English Political Crisis of 1412," *History* 65 (1980), 1-16.

foretelling events that they expected to happen, or as a warning.[335] Portents, though their meanings were not clearly indicated by chroniclers and left deliberately open to interpretation, had significant place in medieval narratives as signs of some particular events.[336] Similar to the earlier examples of the use of portents in the medieval chronicle writing, as it can be observed for example in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* and Orderic Vitalis' *Ecclesiastical History*, [337] there are several entries related to the portents written during the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries.

One of the striking points relating to weather conditions is that of the chroniclers of the period, only Walsingham made a direct connection between the snow and expectations for good rule. For Walsingham, people interpreted this heavy snow as indicating either that Henry would be a king "harsh in his governance and kingship", or, on the other hand, that it was "as an excellent omen, saying that the king would make the snows and frosts of vices in the kingdom disappear and austere fruits of virtue appear, so that it could truly be said by his subjects."[338] Although Walsingham wrote about the doubts of people, -which may also be regarded as reflecting his own hesitation on the kingly practice of the new king- of the two interpretations, he supports the second. He wrote that the behaviour and character of Henry V "seemed to be appropriate to every situation that would foster the acts of virtue, and men considered themselves fortunate who were permitted to follow in his footsteps."[339] The change of ideas from doubts into an expectancy and firm support for the policies of the new king would be settled gradually in time with regard to his political actions. Walsingham composed his accounts of Henry V's reign during the

[335] Given-Wilson, *Chronicles*, 22 and C.S. Watkins, *History and the Supernatural in Medieval England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 2007), 48-55.
[336] Given-Wilson, *ibid*., 22.
[337] Ibid., 29. For example, for a portent on the coronation day of William the Conqueror, see *The Ecclesiastical History of Orderic Vitalis*, *Vol: II* ed. Marjorie Chibnall (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1969), 185.
[338] *The St. Albans Chronicle*, 620-621.
[339] *Ibid*., 621.

1420s shortly before his death. These were the years after the victory of Henry in the Battle of Agincourt, and his success in the Treaty of Troyes. This factor caused the retrospective confidence in his account of the reign of Henry V.[340] Walsingham would confess this sea-change in the interpretations of both himself and public and write that "men considered themselves fortunate who were permitted to follow in his footsteps"[341] as the following years of Henry's reign showed.

The semi-official account of the *Gesta* does not give such an account but it draws attention to the point that when Henry was crowned, he was "young in years but old in experience."[342] Later, Henry would strive to promote the Church, common good and justice in the domestic affairs and to establish peace in both England and France.[343] Although Walsingham's account seems to be more explicit on the doubts and expectations, these two different narratives actually do not tell us much about Henry's style of kingship. This can be regarded very normal since the entries are related to the coronation day of Henry V. But, the doubts show that there was an obvious mistrust of Lancastrian kingship and this did not only come from complaints about the bad government of Henry IV. Henry V was also as the Prince Hal, was a very controversial figure in the eyes of his contemporaries.

When looking at the *Brut*, the *London Chronicles* and *An English Chronicle*, it is almost impossible to find any sort of implied criticism of Henry V's kingship in terms of common good principle in contrast the evidence in these chronicles relating to the discontent of people about Henry IV's kingly style. These chronicles devoted much of their accounts on Henry V's reign to the issues such as Henry V's military campaigns in France and the threat of Lollardy. It is really difficult to determine why

[340] Given-Wilson, *Chronicles*, 29.
[341] *The St. Albans Chronicle*, 621.
[342] *Gesta*, 3.
[343] *Ibid*., 3.

the chronicles did not consider the fiscal problems and the discussions about the restoration of the order and law, which will be touched below, in the realm during the reign of Henry V. However, it can be speculatively claimed that the narratives of these chronicles on the reign of Henry V were finalised during the reign of Henry VI and this was the time when Henry V's image, after his domestic and external achievements, as the ideal king had started to develop constructed in the minds. Perhaps, if Henry V had been an unsuccessful king like his father, they would have inserted some critical entries on his policies within the scope of the common good principle.

Interestingly, it should be noted that unlike the silence of its parts on the kingly style of Henry IV, the *Brut* in its entries on the reign of Henry V gives the most explicit criticism of Henry IV's kingship in the work. This possibly derives from the fact that the parts of the chronicle on Henry V's reign were started to be compiled throughout the reign of Henry V and completed after his death. This entry was recorded about twenty years after the ascension of Henry V.[344] Besides, it should be indicated that the tense relationship between Henry V and his father, particularly in the last years of the latter's reign might possibly have provided the freedom to criticise Bolingbroke's kingship. According to the compiler of the chronicle, when Henry V came to the throne, he promised good rule to his subjects. The establishment of justice would be the main aim of his government. Therefore, Henry put the general outline of his purpose very obviously before the Lords and the Commons:

> Syrys, ye are þeple þat I haue cherysyd & mayntynyd in Ryot & wylde gouernaunce; and here I geue yow all in commaundment, & and charge yow, þat from this day forward þat ye forsake al

[344] Kingsford, *English Historical Literature*, 76-78, 115.

> mysgouernance, & lyve aftyr þe lawys of Almyhethy God, & aftyr þe laws of ouere londe.[345]

As it has been stated above, it is difficult to find a direct criticism of Henrician government within the scope of the establishment of justice and the preservation of the common good of the subjects. There are two strong reasons for the lack of solid evidence for this interpretation. From the perspective of political history, this depended on a very valid reason. Henry V's reign was very successful in both domestic and external affairs. When we look from a historiographical perspective, apart from Usk's and Walsingham's chronicles, the best authorities of the period were produced by the pens of historians who were very close to the court. It is true that there is no evidence that these works were written under the direct patronage of Henry.

But, as shown above, these historians were in the close retinue of Lancastrian king such the poets Thomas Hoccleve and John Lydgate. Henry V was interested in the genre of *mirror of princes* as well as written evidence in the chronicles. He owned some chronicles.[346] Besides, it is known that Henry V commissioned Thomas Hoccleve to write the *Regement of Princes* from, which includes references to the *mirror of princes* such as Gile of Rome's *De Regimine Principum*.[347] As it is well-known, this book is important advice book for Henry and reflects his interest in the ideal of good kingship.[348] Besides, it should be indicated that this work was written shortly before the *Gesta* and the *Liber Metricus*. This evidence combines with the fact that there was a close relationship between Henry and the authors of the

[345] *Brut*, 594. Similar entries can be found in the later biographies of Henry V such as the *First English Life of Henry V*, which was written in the early sixteenth century. See p.19.
[346] Given- Wilson, *Chronicles*, 75.
[347] Strohm, *England's Empty Throne*, 181.
[348] Rosemarie McGerr, *A Lancastrian Mirror for Princes* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001), Chapter Four.

chronicles. Although there is no any evidence that the authors of the *Gesta* and Elmham wrote directly with propagandistic intentions on the order of Henry V, these facts may indicate why there was not little criticism of the government of Henry V in these chronicles.

Actually, the issue of Henry V's taxation policy to finance his expedition in France was hotly debated in Parliament. In the *Parliament Rolls* of 1413 and 1414, emphasis on good governance for the good of the realm was frequently propounded. For instance, in the opening speech of 1413 Parliament, the king's uncle and chancellor, Henry Beaufort, talked about the king's need for "the advice and counsel" of the lords and the Commons "for the proper and effective support" of "Henry's estate,...good governance and upholding of his laws within the realm," and the support for "the resisting of his enemies outside the kingdom." As a response to this, the speaker of the Commons, William Stourton underlined that they would grant the necessary subsidies for the establishment of good governance in the realm. But, at the same time, Stourton reminded the king of the unfulfilled promises of his father, Henry IV. Stourton recalled before the king that the commons "had requested good governance on many occassions" and taken promises for this from his father but Henry V was "well aware of how this was subsequently fulfilled and carried out."[349]

Similar evidence can be detected elsewhere in the *Parliament Rolls*. But, these conventions were not well recorded in the main chronicles of the period. The absence of such entries can be explained by the personal aims of the chroniclers. In some cases, there are entirely different entries in these two chronicles. The authors of the *Gesta* and *Liber Metricus* drew a completely different picture from the exemplified warnings and debates in the *Parliament Rolls*. This seems to be a

[349] *Parliament Rolls* (General Editor: Given-Wilson), 1413 May Parliament.

deliberate narrative strategy. Both chroniclers pass over any implications of the discontent of the people with the policies of the king or the debates in the Parliament despite the fact they had easy access to the first-hand documents and sources for these.

A considerable space for the Parliament meetings can be seen in their entries on 1416 Parliament. The reason why they give an account of this Parliament is also a part of their personal narrative strategy. The meeting of the Parliament was just one year after the victory of Agincourt and before the planning of a new expedition for Normandy. Further, a double subsidy, which was more than Henry V expected, was given to the king. For example, the author of the *Gesta*, in his account, tries to give the impression of very compatible relationships between the Commons and the king. The king always determines his actions "by the common counsel of all" and decides "what should further be done for the general good and for the benefit and tranquility of the kingdom and commonalty."[350] Very similar description can be observed in *Liber Metricus*. In his very brief account for the Parliament of 1416, Elmham writes as follows:

> On 19 October there took place the parliament of London, in which the king brought forth to his people their established rights. As peace could not be restored by just means, he asked to prepare for war by the counsel of the kingdom. Since the former sums had been spent, the fisc was empty: no wonder, as the cause to mark was evident. The nobles said in answer that the kingdom had to be taxed; it grieved the king that England should scatter so much of its wealth. But since it was observed that the money of the kingdom was so scarce, by God's help, the populace acted patiently. They lent the money, furnished the costs and prayed for the king. The fury of the French stood still, preparing a fraud. The king concluded the parliement to reluctantly make war on the untamed enemies who lacked piety.[351]

[350] *Gesta*, 123.

[351] Elmham, *Liber Metricus*, 147. Octobris deca-nona dies dat Parliamentum/ Londoniis quo Rex fert rata jura suis./Hinc, quia Pax justis mediis nequit esse reperta/ Consilio regni bella paranda petit/Sumptibus hic priscis fiscus vacuus reperitur/ Nec Mirum cum sit causa notanda patens/Taxari regnum proceres referunt quod oportet/Rex dolet hinc quia tot Anglia spargit opes./Sed regni lucro quia sparsio tanta notatur/Auxiliante Deo, plebs patienter agit/Mutuat, et praebet censum pro Rege

Likewise, the entries in Walsingham on the parliamentary meetings and financial issues during Henry IV's reign are not as frequent as the related entries on his father's time. The entries are very sketchy and do not convey any implication of criticism of Henry's governance. For instance, Walsingham does not tell us anything about what had been done in the Parliaments of 1413 and 1414, which were directly concerned with the restoration of order and maintenance of public good.[352] But, this cannot be taken as evidence of Walsingham's Lancastrian point of view. The facts that there are several details on the discontent of the people about Henry IV's policies, and the entry, which is discussed above, about the doubts of the people when Henry V came to the throne, refute such kind of an assertion. It should also be noted that as a monk from the St.Albans monastery, the main issue for Walsingham, in his chronicle for the reign of Henry V, was to record of the religious matters, such as the Council of Constance, which was held between 1414-1418 and was very significant to end the schisms in the Church, and the threat of Lollardy throughout England.

Besides, it should be remembered once again that the chronicle was completed in the 1420s, before the death of Henry V, and Walsingham might therefore omitted any negative connotation about Henry V. This is a strong possibility as it is considered that he omitted the negative sentences on John Gaunt from his chronicle when Bolingbroke came to the throne (for this, see my discussion in the chapter on the succession problem). As it is underlined above, both the *Brut*

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precatur/Francorum rabies stat referendo dolum/ Rex hinc concludit invitus praelia ferre/Hostibus indomitis qui pietate carent.

[352] For instance in the parliament of 1414, similar to his speech in the parliament of 1413 that I mentioned above, chancellor Henry Beaufort explains the main intention of Henry V as " effective preservation, governance and maintenance of the peace and of the good laws of his land…" *Parliament Rolls* (General Editor: Given-Wilson), April 1414.

and *London Chronicles* do not contain adequate material for the detection of critical attitudes about Henry V's kingship. The entries on his reign belong to the years of Henry VI's reign, when Henry V's achievements were beginning to assume of a strong myth in the midst of the military losses and internal conflicts of Henry VI's reign.

However, implied discontent, especially for the taxation policy of Henry V, and criticism of the preservation of the common good in the realm can be found in Adam Usk's chronicle. From its beginning to the end of his account of the reign of Henry V, Usk takes a more balanced position on the king's policies. This position can be read as a critical stance, which looks like his narrative for the reign of Bolingbroke. The frequent emphases on the heavy taxation take place in the parts for the reign of Henry V in Usk's chronicle. For instance, Usk writes that just after he came to the throne, Henry "imposed a tax of tenth on the clergy's goods and a fifteenth on the laity's goods in the Parliament held at Westminster."[353] In another place of his chronicle, an account of king's financial policy turns into a representation of the lust of Henry for money: "the king despatched a number of his close supporters throughout the realm to borrow money from anybody in the kingdom who was rich."[354]

These entries can also be interpreted as evidence of the chronicler's general tendency to narrate events as they actually happened. But, the last part of Usk's chronicle explicitly displays discontent and criticism of Henry's policies. In this respect, these entries much more reflect critical implications. After narrating a series of the events, such as Henry's marriage to Katherine, the daughter of French king Charles VI, and especially the sentences related to the serious military losses of the

[353] *Usk*, 243-245. Usk, most probably, refers to the Parliament of 1413.
[354] *Ibid*., 253.

English in France, Usk draws attention to the point that the king "is now fleecing everyone with any money, rich or poor, throughout the realm"[355] to take the revenge of the losses in France. For Usk, this enterprise would cause the waste of money and the men of the kingdom. He also emphasizes that "the unbearable impositions being demanded from the people for this end" would result in "mutterings and curses, and by hatred of such extortions." Usk finishes his chronicle with a moral and instructive warning: "I pray that my supreme lord may not in the end, like Julius, and Ahasuerus, and Alexander, and Hector, and Cyrus, and Darius, and Macchabeus incur the sword of the Lord's fury."[356]

This entry warrants a brief discussion because it is reminiscent of the criticism brought against Ricardian kingship and how Richard II had violated the rights of his subjects with references to the biblical and classical examples. As is well-known, biblical and classical allusions were certainly an important part of the medieval chronicle writing and literary style. They always served to give moral and political messages and convey intentions of the medieval authors.[357] They were often employed in both the Lancastrian documents and the chronicles of the period when representing Richard II. For instance, in the sermon he delivered in the October Parliament of 1399, Thomas Arundel associated the tyrannical acts of Richard II with the Seleucid emperor Antiochus and introduced Henry IV as a new Judas Maccabeus.[358] These moral exemplifications have been used in different contexts with different purposes. Henry Hotspur, who rebelled against Henry IV in 1403, associates himself in a letter with Mattathias, who had helped Maccabeus, with

[355] *Ibid*., 271.
[356] *Ibid*., 271.
[357] Jenni Nuttall, "'Vostre Humble Matatyas': Culture, Politics and the Percies*" in Of Mice and and Men: Image, Belief and Regulation in Late Medieval England*, ed. Linda Clark (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2005), 69-84.
[358] *Parliament Rolls*, October Parliament 1399.

reference to his role in the Lancastrian Usurpation.[359] In Usk's chronicle, such kind of examples can also be observed. For the tyranny of Richard II, Usk shows "the examples of Croesus, of Belshazzar, of Antiochus, and of other tyrants who have persecuted their people."[360] Undoubtedly, Usk's view of Richard II is not the same as how he saw the Lancastrian kings. In several parts of his chronicle, there are explicit expressions of praise for Henry V. However, in contrast to the other chroniclers of the period, Usk employed biblical and classical allusions as a means of criticism and a sign of dissatisfaction with Henry V's policies.

V.3 The Emergence of "Common Weal" as a Concept in the Chronicles of the Reign of Henry VI

Until this point, I discussed how the chroniclers of the reign of Henry V approached the problem of common good issue. In this final part of the chapter, it is necessary to discuss the attitude of the chronicles written during the reign of Henry VI. As indicated in the introduction and Chapter II of this thesis, the chronicle sources of the period between 1422-1461 are in general not convenient and workable. As Charles L.Kingsford emphasized, they are mostly "broken and fragmentry."[361] However, of the contemporary chronicles of this period, *An English Chronicle*, the *London Chronicles*, especially *Gregory's Chronicle* as a part of these chronicles, and John Hardyng's chronicle seems workable for the argument of this chapter because although they were completed under the Yorkist reign, the chroniclers started to write during the reign of Henry VI.

[359] *Royal and Historical Letters During the Reign of Henry IV*, ed. F.C. Hingeston (London:Longman, 1860), Ixxxviii.
[360] *Usk*, 91.
[361] Kingsford, *English Historical Literature*, 140.

As discussed in the introduction to this chapter, there is a change of discourse in the articulation of the theme of common good in the chronicles of this period. It is very clear that, like the chronicles of the reign of both Henry IV and Henry V, the chronicles of the reign of Henry VI placed much emphasis on the issues such as the establishment of justice, preservation of the common good and the observation of the basic rights of the subjects in the realm. This is very natural in a period of political and fiscal crisis, which will be touched upon briefly below. But, unlike the chronicles of the earlier Lancastrian period, they expressed their opinions on the theme of common good more explicitly by employing words such as "common profit" and common weal" So, this change in the discourse requires attention and should be read in the historical context.

Firstly, the political crisis of Lancastrian kingship during the reign of Henry VI should be clarified. The reign of Henry VI between 1422-1450 can be generally considered as a period of stability, although there was a serious conflict between Humphrey, the Duke of Gloucester and Henry Beaufort, the Bishop of Winchester for the governance of England under the long minority of Henry VI. [362] However, it is not possible to see any great complaints about the political conflicts or the fiscal problems in the entries of the chronicles until the 1440s. For instance, one of the most striking examples supporting this fact is the lack of narrative in *An English Chronicle* for the years from 1422, when Henry VI's reign began, to the 1440s. For the period after the 1440s, it can be easily said that the political instability and financial problems were common. There is no need to give the details of these problems in detail. But, the factors such as the loss of Normandy in the military disaster of 1449-1450 and the deterioration of the domestic economic situation and

[362] Keen, *England in the Later Middle Ages*, 413.

the mental illness of Henry VI after 1453 motivated the political opposition against the Lancastrian government.[363] The discontent of the people from all sections of the society about the king and his counsellors were voiced publicly and written in the contemporary documents of the period. This popular discontent and anxiety were naturally propounded with reference to the theme of common good. The chroniclers' entries for the period after the 1440s have been shaped by this actual political situation and the prevalent political discourse developing by the effect of Yorkist opposition against the Lancastrian dynasty.

It should be firstly indicated that all the accounts in these chronicles share some basic notions for the good governance and the preservation of the common good in the realm. These are also available in the chronicles of both Henry IV and Henry V. For example, similar to the entries related to the good governance and criticism brought against Lancastrian kingship in the sections written throughout the early Lancastrian period, the second part of *An English Chronicle*, which was compiled in the later years of Henry VI and the first years of Edward IV, contains some well-established notions about perfect kingship. For example, the theme of common good has been shaped around the theme of evil counsellors of the king. It can be obviously detected in the chronicle that "Henry VI was the victim of evil counsellors and that the Yorkist cause was to act for the common good by rescuing the king and restoring the sound government."[364]

This idea is very evident in the chronicle's entry for the twenty second year of the reign of Henry VI. It writes that when Normandy was lost in that year, the common people blamed the king's counsellors for this disastrous failure of

[363] *Ibid*., 409-436.
[364] "Introduction" in *An English Chronicle*, Ixxxix.

Lancastrian kingship. For the Commons, the Duke of Suffolk had sold Normandy.[365] Similarly, *Hardyng's Chronicle*, the *Brut* and the various manuscripts of the *London Chronicles* like the *Great Chronicle of London* and *Gregory's Chronicle*, touched upon the bad governance, heavy taxation and the effects of the evil counsellors during the reign of Henry VI. Considering the limits of the chapter, and the similarities of these criticisms to the already mentioned examples from the chronicles in the sections of the chapter, related to the earlier Lancastrian kings, there is no need to give several examples here.

It should be pointed out that all these examples show us that the chronicles of the later Lancastrian period were, like the chronicles of the early Lancastrian period, completely free from any sort of direction and manipulation of Lancastrian dynasty. As it has been indicated above, all the chronicles of the Lancastrian period refer to the theme of common good and use it, in many cases, to criticise Lancastrian government. What is distinctive for the chronicles of the reign of Henry VI is that they employed, in some cases, the concepts of "common profit" and "common weal" in their accounts. For example, in *An English Chronicle*, the compiler uses the phrase of "common weal" while he is narrating the *Articles* written by the Yorkist earls in 1459 to the king to complain about the political and financial crisis in the country. He writes that "the prosperyte, and welfare of his noble estate" as well as "the comon wele of his londe" were under a great threat due to the "grete oppressyon, extorsion, robry, murthur, and other vyolences"[366] prevalent in the realm. In another part of the chronicle, the compiler uses the phrase of "common profit." He points out that the

[365] *Ibid*., 69. There are similar examples throughout the chronicle for the years between 1440-1460 but it is not much necessary to present all of these here.
[366] *An English Chronicle*, 82-83.

Yorkist opposition was supported by the commons because the Duke of York "loued the communes preseured the commune profyte of the londe."[367]

Similarly, in *Gregory's Chronicle*, the theme of common good is emphasised with the phrase of "common weal." In his entry on Jack Cade's rebellion, the chronicler writes that the rebels "enteryde in to the cytte of London as men… as they sayde, for the comyn wele of realme of Ingelonde."[368] *In John Hardyng's Chronicle*, which was written during the reigns of Henry VI and Edward IV, the references for the "common weal" do not only constitute the sections of the chronicle on Henry VI. For example, in its section on Henry V, the chronicler praises Henry V by saying that he "stode so sure in rightfull gouernaunce/ For common weale, to God his hie plesaunce."[369] However, in its sections on Henry VI, the employment of the phrase turns into a criticism of Lancastrian kingship. The Duke of York, for Hardyng, represents the embodiement of the justice and preservation of the common good. According to Hardyng, "his good purpose to pursue and spede" was the maintanance of "the comon wele."[370] Lastly, an example can be given from the *Great Chronicle of London*. The anonymous compiler writes for Jack Cade's rebellion that "he and othir of his company comyn as the kyngs trewe subgectys, to Rrefourm the comon weale of thys land."[371] These examples are significant since they show the change of the discourse by which the criticism against Lancastrian kingship was propounded in the chronicles of the period. But, on the other hand, it should be pointed out that although there are many entries, shown in this chapter, about the theme of common good in the chronicles of the period such as the *Brut* and the *London Chronicles*,

[367] *Ibid*., 72.
[368] *Gregory's Chronicle*, 181.
[369] *The Chronicle of Hardyng*, 389.
[370] *Ibid*., 401.
[371] *The Great Chronicle*, 183.

there are not any references to the phrases of "common profit" and "common weal" in them. So, how should we interpret the evidence in the chronicles?

I think that the chronicles' employment of the phrases such as "common profit and common weal" cannot be considered simply as a representation of a criticism of Lancastrian kingship under the Yorkist popular opposition and propaganda. It is true that the Yorkists used the common good theme, as it was evident in the Lancastrian attack on Ricardian kingship, to reinforce their arguments against Lancastrian kingship. For example, as looked to the *Parliament Rolls* of 1461, in the first parliament under the reign of Edward IV, the Yorkists often used the phrase of the preservation "common weal" as well as their claim to the throne by hereditary right. A very obvious example for this is, from the *Parliament Rolls*, a speech delivered by James Strangeways,[372] the speaker of the Commons in the Parliament and reads as follows:

> And since in the time of the usurped reign of your said adversary Henry, late called King Henry VI, extortion, murder, rape, the shedding of innocent blood, riot and unrighteousness were commonly practised in your said realm without punishment; we are absolutely sure that it will please your said good grace to promote everything that may advance the said common weal, the exercise of justice and righteousness, and the punishment of the great and terrible offenders, extortioners and rioters, and to have pity, compassion and mercy upon the innocents, to God's pleasure; whom we beseech long to continue and prosper your noble reign over us, your true and lowly subjects, in honour, joy and felicity.[373]

On the other hand, the use of the word has also come to appear in the works of the Lancastrian polemicist and political theorist, John Fortescue and other sources

[372] For Strangeways' life, career and his Yorkist connections look John Smith Roskell, *The Commons and their English Speakers in the Parliament, 1376-1523* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1965), 81, 111, 271-274.
[373] *Parliament Rolls* (General Editor: Given-Wilson), Parliament of November 1461.

of the period before 1461.[374] As contemporary chronicles of the reign of Henry VI, the mentioned works have been influenced by this discourse. In this sense, the chronicles were actually reflected the political and intellectual discourse of the period by employing both phrases. It is evident from the chronicles, the political tracts and the documents of the fifteenth century that the phrase of "common weal" became common in the political discourse. The reason for this is not exactly determined. But, there are some existing explanations for this. One modern historian of fifteenth-century England, John Watts, has suggested that the public as a group came "to compromise a substantial part of the population." In this process, the meaning of the common expanded as "the common stock of political expectations and languages shared, in some degree, by all classes in fifteenth-century England."[375] On the other hand, another historian of the period Gerald Harris indicates that a new form of political society "sufficiently large and varied but also sufficiently close-knit, to form a commonwealth."[376]

This shift became naturally influential on the political discourses of the people from all sections of the society from the literate classes such as the chroniclers and their readers to the common people like Jack Cade and his friends. The emergence of the phrases of "common profit" and "common weal" should be understood in this context. On the other hand, as it has been mentioned above, the existence of these phrases does not necessarily mean that these were used by the chroniclers for propagandistic purposes. In addition to the historical context, in which these concepts emerged, the intentions of the chroniclers do refute such an idea. I have already pointed out that the various surviving manuscripts of the *Brut*

[374] For examples of the employment of the word in this period, see Phil Withington, Society *in Early Modern England: The Vernacular Origins of Some Powerful Ideas* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2010).
[375] Watts, "The Pressure of the Public," 159-180,
[376] Gerald L. Harris, "Political Society and the Growth of Government in Late Medieval England," Past *and Present*, cxxxvi (1993), 28-57.

and the *London Chronicles* did not use these phrases. As for the other chronicles, their attitudes in criticising Lancastrian kingship through Yorkist language of common good, might have been shaped by the fact that they were, in their complete forms, composed in the later years of the reign of Henry VI and during the reign of Edward IV. For example, it is known that John Hardyng dedicated the last version of his chronicle to Edward IV. However, the fact that some of the entries on the "common weal" in both *An English Chronicle* and *Gregory's Chronicle* were drawn from the documents such as the Articles of the Yorkist earls against King Henry VI directs us to another point. This can be read as evidence for the chronicles' inclination to tell the events how they happened, based on documentary sources rather than attempts for legitimisation and propaganda.

What I wanted to show in the chapters IV and V was neither a detailed discussion of the evolution of the theme of "common good" in the medieval phraseology nor an attempt to contribute to the field of conceptual history. My intention was, as I indicated in the introduction part of the chapter IV, to discuss the content of the chronicles in parallel with their formations to show that the Lancastrian chroniclers did not try to legitimise the Lancastrian kingship with reference to the preservation of the common good of the subjects in the realm. From the evidence in the *Articles of the Deposition*, discussed in Chapter IV, Henry IV attacked Richard II's policies with reference to the common good principle when he came to the throne. The chroniclers, in many senses, shared the same ideas on Ricardian kingship. But, there was not any evidence to claim that they were manipulated or directed by Lancastrian central authority. They moved from already-established principles about kingship and good rule as it is evident in the *Eulogium*, Walsingham and Usk's chronicles. Throughout the reign of Henry V,there were at

the beginning ,some doubts about if Henry V would observe the common good principle in the chronicles. Later, it is possible to observe the implicit criticisms of the Lancastrian kingship in terms of common good principle in the chronicles, as it is evident in the accounts of Adam Usk. However, the chroniclers, in general, had not negative attitude to the governmental practice of Henry V. But, it should also be noted that there is not any evidence displaying that the chronicles of Henry V's reign, in this case, were employed by the Lancastrian government.

The major change was the frequent employment of the phrase of "common weal" in the chronicles and the documents in the later Lancastrian period, as it is seen in *An English Chronicle*, *Hardyng's Chronicle*, *Gregory's Chronicle* and the *Parliament Rolls*. This was not the result of Yorkist influence on the chroniclers. It came from relative expansion of the political society and its effect on the change in political discourse. Lastly, it can be claimed that the accounts in the chronicles were shaped by their personal interests and their selection of the sources as it has been frequently underlined throughout this thesis as well as the mentality of the period in which they wrote. It seems that the chronicles, in their discussions of the theme of common good, were generally motivated by their wish and intention to narrate the events as they saw them rather than propaganda. This can be supported even by the mere fact that the chroniclers turned their criticisms into the Lancastrian kings when they were not pleased with governance of the realm.

CHAPTER VI

FORMAL REPRESENTATION OF LANCASTRIAN KINGS IN THE CHRONICLES: A LANCASTRIAN PROPAGANDA?

VI. 1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, I discussed how the chroniclers saw and represented the place of the Lancastrian kings in the corporate entity of the body politic. In this respect, I tried to show that they contain several critical accounts of Lancastrian kingship with reference to the notion of common good in their works. Thus it was concluded that they were not a part of deliberate Lancastrian propaganda. This chapter will focus on the formal representation of Lancastrian kings.

The formal representation of the kings, like the theme of the "common good," has broad connotations. It may include a wide range of issues from visual representation to written forms. However, in this chapter, depending upon the evidence in the chronicles, I will limit the discussion to the symbolic representation of power and legitimacy in the texts. For an analysis of this issue, some specific cases, such as the coronation of the Lancastrian kings and the royal entry of Henry V into London in 1415, have been selected for analysis. In the limits of this thesis, there is another valid reason for this choice. As the recent scholarship has demonstrated, "the rituals attached to coronations, funerals, marriages and entries" have been used

to reinforce "the power of the monarchy."[377] These have been conventionally considered as Lancastrian propaganda through the chronicles and excessively overemphasized in the secondary literature.[378] The reason for this is that the chronicles of the period gave considerable place to these events. In this sense, a discussion of these cases is concerned with the main argument of the thesis, and the question of whether these in fact demonstrate deliberate Lancastrian propaganda requires attention.

It is necassary to indicate that modern historical scholarship on Lancastrian period has curiously ignored the formal representation of Lancastrian kings though it was conspicuous in contemporary chronicles. This subject deserves closer attention, considering that the formal representation of the kings was an important part of historiography throughout the medieval period. Rather than giving detailed accounts of political events, the chroniclers dealt heavily with symbolic and representative issues, and consequently they offer some quite vivid and concrete descriptions of the formal display of Lancastrian kings. A striking observation in this context is the differences in their treatment of the Lancastrian kings. Whereas, in the case of Henry V, we encounter concrete thematic expressions of the formal representation, such as his entry into London after the Battle of Agincourt in 1415, there is a conspicuous lack of representation in the case of the coronations of all Lancastrian kings.

The differences in question were, partly, a direct result of the kings' different styles of kingship. Henry IV, having come to the throne by promising to change

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[377] Barbara A. Hanawalt and Kathryn L. Reyerson, "Introduction" in *City and Spectacle in Medieval Europe*, eds. Barbara A. Hanawalt and Kathryn L.Reyerson (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994), xi. Since the funerals and marriages do not take large and important space in the chronicles of the Lancastrian period, I did not focus on these.

[378] Really, these formal displays of Lancastrian kingship have generally been considered as Lancastrian propaganda very readily in the secondary literature on Lancastrian texts. For illustration for the reign of Henry IV, see especially Paul Strohm, *Theory and the Postmodern Text* (Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press, 2000), 33-48; the same author's *England's Empty Throne*, 205-212. For the reign of Henry V, Allmand, *Henry V*; for the reign of Henry VI, Griffiths, *The Reign of King Henry VI*, 217-228.

Ricardian royal rule, felt himself obliged to avoid any ostentatious display of his kingship. Henry V, in contrast, desired to establish a powerful kingship within and outside England. His appropriation of ostentatious display, especially exemplified in his entry into London after Agincourt, was thus one of the visible characteristics of his kingship. The chroniclers of his period, as contemporary eye-witnesses, were naturally influenced by this. However, there is no evidence that they were directed specifically by the Lancastrian regime for propagandistic purposes. In the case of Henry VI, it should be indicated that especially in the first years of his reign, the Lancastrian officials did try to use some methods of propaganda against the French - because of the fact that he was the child king of both England and France - as was evident in the two separate coronations of the king. However, the major chronicles of the period, the *Brut* and *London Chronicles* were not official or semi-official instruments of Lancastrian policy. It is true that the limited number of chronicles for the reign of Henry VI recorded the king's coronation and especially his royal entry into London (1431) after his coronation in France (1431) in a very detailed sense, but this did not derive from Lancastrian propaganda.

Like other examples from the chronicles of the former reigns, the existence of these accounts relating to the coronation of Henry VI derives from the fact that they were either eye-witnesses of this event or they depended heavily on the other written sources such as John Lydgate. I will argue in this chapter that, on the one hand, it was such an actual political situation; the different styles of kingship shaped the attitudes of chroniclers of formal representation of the Lancastrian kings. On the other hand, the content of their accounts on the formal displays of the Lancastrian kings, like their entries on consent issue, were determined by their own personal motivations and by the source material that they had for their narratives. So, it should

be underlined that throughout the Lancastrian period, the ritualistic and ceremonical entries in the historical writing of the Lancastrian period were not a device for the mobilisation and consolidation of the Lancastrian dynasty. In this sense, through a comparative examination of the chronicles, this chapter will investigate how and why the historiography of Lancastrian period represented the formal display of Lancastrian kings.

As it has been indicated in the previous chapters using several examples, Lancastrian chronicles did not deliberately attempt to justify the cause of Henry IV since his return from exile. It is true that they recorded the broad-based socio-political support behind Henry as outlined in the third chapter, but, they did not develop deliberate arguments to legitimise the hereditary claim of Henry and the illegitimacy of Richard II. Perhaps for this reason, the so-called Lancastrian chroniclers preferred not to give much place to accounts of the formal display of Henry IV and the succeeding Lancastrian kings. If they had written through a Lancastrian perspective and had been part of the Lancastrian propaganda machine, these sources might have been expected to present ritualistic and ostentatious displays of Lancastrian kings. They must have wanted to use impressive instruments or strategies to justify Henry IV's usurpation. However, they did not try to do this. In this sense, the evidence in the historical writing runs contrary to the modern scholarly claim that "the image of his [Henry IV's] kingship seems to have been indelibly defined by the prophetic promise of 1399"[379] embodied in the portentous and prophetic accounts of Henry IV's coronation in the chronicle literature. On the contrary, the crisis of legitimisation and the attempts to build a justified royal identity

[379] Anthony Goodman "Introduction" in *Henry IV: The Establishment of the Regime, 1399-1406*, ed. Gwilym Dood and Douglas Biggs (York: York Medieval Press, 2003), 4.

did not force the chroniclers to use symbolic connotations and devices for the legitimisation of the Lancastrian regime.

This situation was, at the same time, related to the promise of Henry IV to his subjects. As it has been indicated in the previous chapter, unlike Richard II's exalted image of kingship, Henry IV ensured that he would be a very simple and unpretentious king. This does not mean that "Henry's counter-revolution simply reverted to the position preceding Richard's personal rule."[380] Henry's different style of kingship can be detected in many examples such as his decision "to break with the tradition of burial Westminster Abbey inaugrated by Henry III."[381] However, politics of representation via ritualistic public ceremonies was not, for Bolingbroke, a means of finding a legal basis for the usurpation. In this sense, the formal display of Henry's kingship was not actually presented as a strong functional tool in the historical-writing by using the political and religious potentials of ritualistic representation of his coronation.

In fact, the rituals and ceremonial representations were already employed as a part of the tradition in formal appearances in medieval politics. The rituals and well-established forms and norms of formal performances functioned to consolidate royal authority and legitimate its policy and action. However, "the actors on medieval political stages did not carry out established rituals in a servile way but rather used the given rituals in an utalitarian-rational way."[382] In this sense, they were very dynamic ways of shaping the political agenda. They were appropriated or re-adjusted according to the existing political conditions. Further, they might have been

[380] Hariss, *Shaping the Nation*, 491.
[381] Christopher Wilson, "The Tomb of Henry IV and the Holy Oil of St. Thomas of Canterbury" in *Medieval Architecture and its Intellectual Context: Studies in Honour* of Peter Kidson, eds. Eric Fernie and Paul Crossley (London: The Hambledon Pres,1990), 181-191.
[382] Gerd Althoff, "The Variability of Rituals in the Middle Ages" in *Medieval Concepts of the Past: Ritual, Memory, Historiography*, eds. Gerd Althoff, Johannes Fried, Patrick J. Geary, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 71-89.

re-invented for emerging recent political situations or practicalities "if there was no suitable pre-existing ritual language."[383] It is true that Lancastrian coronation ceremonies and other sorts of public ceremonial celebrations were visibly represented in the historical writing but it is difficult to say that the chroniclers used the ritualistic or ceremonial representations for propagandistic purposes. It can be argued that the historians of the period simply aimed to reflect these ritualistic incidents to report an historical event. This is not to say that they were merely unconscious and insensitive recorders of the facts. As we have discussed for various reasons in the previous chapters, their accounts also reflected the political, constitutional and intellectual climate of the period in which they wrote. But, propaganda is not evident in the expression of Lancastrian kings' coronation ceremonies in the chronicles.

VI.2 The Coronation of Henry IV in the Chronicles

Given this theoretical framework, it might be expected to fix the coronation ceremony of Henry IV not only as the most concrete example of formal display of his kingly power but also the practical reflection of theoretical framework on the rituals and ceremonial representations briefly mentioned above. However, the relative rarity of references in the chronicles to the ostentatious representation of the coronation ceremony of the Lancastrian kings, and the existence of formal representations of Richard II in the chronicles, sometimes in a much more exaggerated way, force us to reconsider. Among the most important chronicles of the period, Walsingham and Usk particularly give some detail of the coronation of Henry IV. On the other hand, the other chroniclers of the period, the *Brut* and the *London*

[383] *Ibid*. 71-89.

Chronicles, due to the formal structure of these sources outlined above in the introduction, do not provide us with much material for a discussion of the coronation. For example, both the *Brut* and the *London Chronicles* were written in annalistic form,[384] which might be one of the possible reasons why they did not give much place to a detailed account of the coronation.

On the other hand, they might have not considered the coronation ceremony as politically and symbolically important event to narrate. For example, among the various manuscripts of the *London Chronicles*, Julius B II manuscript, which was edited by Charles L. Kingsford, includes the most detailed account of the deposition process. As indicated in the previous chapter, it is possible to see nearly all the *Articles of Deposition* and a detailed narrative of the events, which led to the Lancastrian usurpation in the chronicle, but, it is not possible to see any sort of ostentatious display of Henry IV in the work. The chronicler just writes that, the Archbishop of Canterbury, the other bishops such as the Bishop of London and the Archbishop of York as well as Henry, the Prince of Wales sat on the right and left of the king during the coronation ceremony, because the rest of the ceremony was presumably taken by the anonymous chronicler to be a business as usual.[385] This negligence of the coronation ceremony can also be observed in another edited version of the London chronicles.[386] The *Great Chronicle of London*, edited by Thornley, though it has an account of the coronation of Henry IV in the *Harley 565*

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[384]. The form and content of the *Brut* chronicle and the *London Chronicles* have already been discussed in the former chapters. So, there is no need for repetition. See chapters 1, 3 and 4.See *The Great Chronicle*, 72-74.

[385] *Chronicles of London.*, 49.

[386] It should be indicated that the *Brut* chronicle, which has very brief entries on the reign of Henry IV, does not contain any evidence about the coronation ceremony of the king. As it has been debated in the third chapter, there is only a short account about the so-called election of the king by the common consent of the subjects. See *the Brut*, 359-360. The same situation can be observed in another chronicle, William Gregory's London chronicle, which was written in the reign of Henry VI. He has passed over the coronation ceremony. See *Historical Collections*, 102.

manuscript, includes almost the same words existing in the manuscript, edited by Kingsford.[387]

Of the chronicles written during the Lancastrian period, Walsingham describes individual and formal display of Henry IV in the coronation ceremony in its most detailed and full sense. According to Walsingham, when Richard had abdicated, Henry laid claim to the throne in the Westminster Hall as follows:

> As it was obvious from these happenings and the opportunity provided by them that the kingdom of England with its appurtenances was now vacant, the aforesaid Henry, duke of Lancaster, hurriedly rose from his seat, stood erect that he might be seen by the people, and protecting himself by the sign of cross on his face and breast, he called upon the name of Christ…, speaking in his mother tongue… Then the archbishop of Canterbury took him by his right hand and placed him on the throne.And when these things had thus been done, the king rose from seat and looking with a cheerful and kindly face upon the people withdrew to the White Hall.[388]

With this entry, though Walsingham does not possibly tell the whole event, he offers interesting details. He emphasizes the vacancy of the throne. As we can understand from this passage, what Bolingbroke seems to have emphasised was to display physically and concretely that he was now the legitimate king of England. For this reason, he has seated onto the vacant throne "as quickly as any legitimate successor might have done, and perhaps more so."[389] To some extent, it could be argued that Henry, as a usurper, might have wished to manipulate the existing situation with his physical representation by seating on the vacant throne. In this sense, this would be a convenient visual challenge to reinforce his legitimacy in the eyes of those who attended his coronation. Besides, it could be asserted that Henry IV's coronation included some more important symbolic formal displays of legitimacy. For example,

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[387] *The Great Chronicle*, 73-74.
[388] Walsingham, *Chronica Maiora*, 311. Similar account can also be observed in the *Eulogium*. Since, I have referred to this quotation for another reason in the third chapter. I am not repeating it here again. See *Eulogium*, 383-384.
[389] Strohm, *England's Empty Throne*, 204.

the king was crowned and anointed by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Arundel, a relentless enemy of Richard II.[390] The Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Arundel placed the ring of coronation on Henry IV's finger "saying 'Receive the ring of royal authority'."[391]

Another account which has symbolic and formal meaning is Adam of Usk's entry about the coronation. Under the sub-title of "why the king has four swords," Usk underlined the use of these swords "carried in the king's presence" symbolising "the advancement of military virtues...twofold mercy… and the execution of justice without rancour."[392] This sword symbolism refers to the values and qualities of the new king as opposed to his deposed predecessor. But, more importantly, there is an emphasis on the explicit display of the *curtana*, the symbolic sword of St.Edward the Confessor, which was one of the state swords traditionally used in the coronation ceremonies of the English kings.[393]

Both Walsingham and Usk write about the *Curtana*. As it was indicated by Usk, the *Curtana* was carried by the Prince of Wales (Henry V) during the coronation ceremony. In his chronicle, Walsingham points that "an earl, who is more eminent than others will redeem this sword, and then will carry it in front of the king."[394] Walsingham also drew attention to another important point: "on the feast of translation of St.Edward, king and Confessor, King Henry IV was crowned at

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[390] *Parliament Rolls*, *October Parliament, 1399*. Strohm, *England's Empty Throne*, 205. The examples for the formal displays conventional in the coronation ceremonies of the kings can be observed in Walsingham's chronicle. See, *ibid*., 233-235.
[391] *The St. Albans Chronicle*, 235.
[392] *Usk*, 71-72.
[393] About the legend related to the *curtana* of St. Edward the Confessor, see Janelle Greenberg, *The Radical Face of the Ancient Constitution: St. Edward's "Laws" in Early Modern Political Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 52. Edmund G. Gardner, *Arthurian Legend in Italian Literature* (Letchworth: The Temple Press, 1930), 172.
[394] *The St.Albans Chronicle*, 235.

Westminster… on which a year ago banished into exile."[395] Thus, the use of this sword, with the changing day of the coronation ceremony from the Sunday to the Monday, may be read as symbolic political messages from the Lancastrians to signify the change of regime - though it is difficult to be sure about this. The day was possibly chosen in order to pinpoint symbolically the defeat of Richard by Henry IV because of fact that it was both the day when Bolingbroke had been sent to exile and because Edward the Confessor was Richard II's personal patron saint during the last years of his kingship.[396] At this point, two interrelated questions require attention. Can these symbolic actions be considered as propagandistic innovations in terms of the coronation ceremonies? And, did the accounts in the chronicles function as an instrument of the propaganda machine?

It is necessary to indicate that all these examples demonstrate that the Lancastrians might have wished to employ some politically symbolic devices in the coronation of Henry IV. In some senses, they would be visually helpful against Ricardian kingship in order to emphasise their legitimacy. As mentioned above, this is politically reasonable for a usurper, whose legitimacy was a subject of debate when he came to the throne. On the other hand, as Ernst Kantrowicz has stressed, the coronation of medieval kings functioned as a means of underlining dynastic continuity. For this reason, the accession of the new king was solemnised by the coronation ceremony.[397] With regard to this, Bolingbroke might have wanted to emphasise through the ostentatious display of his coronation that his kingship was

[395] Walsingham, *Chronica Maiora*, 312. For the conflict between Richard II and Henry IV before the Lancastrian usurpation and for a discussion of why Henry had been sent into exile; see Chris Given-Wilson, "Richard II, Edward II and the Lancastrian Inheritance," *English Historical Review* 109 (1994), 553-571.

[396] Although it is a fact that Edward the Confessor always figured in the coronations since the time of William I, his cult was very important for Richard II. For the special devotion of Richard II to St. Edward the Confessor in the service of his sacral image of kingship see, Saul, *The Three Richards*, 173-176.

[397] Ernst H. Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies*, 317-336. Strohm, *England's Empty Throne*, 205.

actually legitimate and a part of continuity in the accession of the English kings. However, it should be indicated that there is insufficient evidence to claim that the Lancastrian coronation ceremony was a definite break with the traditon of the coronation of medieval English kings. The most detailed study of English coronation ceremonies to-date is that of Leopold G.W. Legg. In his work, *English Coronation Records*, Legg shows that there was not a great change in the coronation ceremonies of English kings during periods of political crisis such as the Wars of Roses and the religious conflicts of the sixteenth century.[398] The main elements, such as the granting of the *regalia*, the use of the swords and the chalice and paten of St. Edward were preserved as symbolic and visual representation of kingship.[399] So, it must be indicated that the coronation of Henry IV cannot be regarded a break with earlier formal displays of the coronation ceremonies.

A theoretical discussion of the coronation records or how chroniclers narrated the coronation ceremonies of each medieval English king are not relevant to this study. But, since the modern literature, as indicated above, has traditionally considered the coronation accounts of Bolingbroke as a distinct form of propaganda - it should be kept in mind that all coronations include propagandistic elements -,[400] the issue of how the chroniclers of the Lancastrian period narrated the coronation of Richard II does require a brief discussion. As discussed in the Chapter 4, Lancastarian dynasty tried to give a pejorative image of the Ricardian period by the

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[398] Wickham Legg, *English Coronation Records* (Westminster: Archibald Constable & Co Ltd., 1901), xv. See also Ernst Percy Schramm, *A History of the English Coronation* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1937).

[399] Linda Camidge, "The Celebration of Kingship in the Fifteenth Century", University Of Exeter, unpublished PhD. thesis, 1996, 66.

[400] All coronations are important public events stating visually the king's religious/sacral right for government, the duties of the king to his subjects and the obligations of the subjects to their kings. See Greenberg, The *Radical Face*, 49. Additionally, look David J. Sturdy, "'Continuity Versus Change': Historians and the English Coronations of the Medieval and Early Modern Periods," in ed. Janos M. Bak *Coronations, Medieval and Early Modern Monarchic Ritual* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 228-246.

means of official documentations such as the *Articles of Depositon*. These found expression in the chronicles, even if they had not been inserted for propagandistic purposes. However, it should be pointed out that even the ostentatious display and representation of Richard II's coronation ceremony in some chronicles of the Lancastrian period are enough to demonstrate that they were not a part of Lancastrian point of view. In the narratives of the coronation, though they were written mostly during the Lancastrian period, there are more ostentatiously representations of Richard's coronation ceremony when compared to those of all Lancastrian kings. Like their narratives on the coronation of Henry IV, the *Brut* and the *London Chronicles* and the *Eulogium* have not given much attention to Richard's coronation. However, it occupies an important place in one of Walsingham's chronicles. Almost all the instruments and representations existing in the coronation ceremony of Henry IV can also been seen in Richard II's coronation. For instance, from several examples of the formal display and exalted image of Richard II, one scene on the coronation day in Westminster, is sufficient to see the parallel formal display of Henry IV and Richard II.

> As soon as the king arrived at the altar, he knelt down on the pavement before the altar, which had been covered with cloaks and carpets. After the prayer I have mentioned had been said, the archbishop and those bishops who were present knelt on the floor around the king, while two bishops reverently chanted the litany.When this was finished, the king was raised upand led to his chair, while the choir sang this antiphon, 'Let your hand be strengthened.' Then the bishop preached a sermon to the people on the subject of the king and his kingdom, showing how the king should behave towards his people and in what ways the people owed him obedience.[401]

There is no need to give the all details of how Walsingham represented the coronation ceremony of Richard II because they have not distinguishing characters

[401] Walsingham, *Chronica Maiora,* 39.

and include symbols and representations visible in all the coronation ceremonies. However, frequent reference to the sword symbolism should be emphasized. The sword of the state, the *Curtana* of Edward the Confessor, was also used in Richard's coronation and before that, as will be shown below. As stated above, both Walsingham and Usk emphasised the formal display of the sword in the coronation of Henry IV. However, internal evidence from Walsingham's chronicle is contrary to the claim that this was an innovation to legitimise and propagate the Lancastrian claim through formal display. Like Usk's entry on the sword, Walsingham writes that the *Curtana*, the sword of the state, was carried by an earl as a customary practice.[402] Furthermore, there is further external evidence for the use of the *Curtana* in the coronation ceremonies of the English kings. In his *Chronica Maiora*, Matthew Paris for the coronation of Henry III writes that "the earl of Chester carried the sword of St.Edward, which was called 'Curtein' before the king, as a sign that he was the earl of the palace and had by law the power of restraining the king if he should commit an error."[403]

These examples are sufficient to show the weakness of arguing that the sword symbolism was specifically Lancastrian propaganda. Additionally, some final words should be told about Usk's account. In Usk's chronicle, in his entry for the year of 1377, when Richard II came to the throne, there was no ostentatious formal representation of his coronation. In that part of his chronicle, Usk -- consistent with his attack on Ricardian kingship in his accounts by 1399 -- criticizes Richard's kingly style, but states that points to the the expectations from Richard when he came to the throne. But, his reign was a dissappointment due to "wanton evils, extortions,

[402] "Next the earl, whose office it was to carry the sword in front of the king, bought back at a given price the sword which the king had offered up,and,receiving it,carried it in front of the king." *Ibid*.,42.
[403] Cited in Suzanne Lewis, *The Art of Matthew Paris in the Chronica Majora* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 205-206.

and other intolerable injustices upon the realm."[404] However, in those parts of his chronicle related to 1400, he writes about some prophecies which he believed to represent for the fall of Richard II.

> At this lord's coronation, three symbols of royalty had foretold three misfortunes which would befall him; firstly, during the procession he lost one of his coronation shoes, so that to begin with the people rose up against him, and for the rest of his life hated him; secondly, one of golden spurs fell off, so that next the knights rose up and rebelled against him; thirdly, during the banquet a sudden gust of wind blew the crown from his head, so that thirdly and finally he was deposed from his kingdom and replaced by King Henry.[405]

So, should we necessarily read the political prophecy on his coronation associated with his fall and the sword symbolism as Lancastrian propaganda? The issue of sword symbolism has been already discussed. As for the above-mentioned political prophecy, the reference to the loss of the coronation shoe would also be observed in the *Westminster Chronicle*, a chronicle of Richard II's reign, whose entries are generally very symphathetic to Richard.[406] Usk was not an eye-witness to the coronation of Richard II. Additionally, unlike Walsingham, he started writing very late and possibly wrote this entry after the deposition of Richard II. When Richard was crowned, he was either in Oxford as a student or at his hometown Usk. These might be a sort of explanation for the lack of ostentatious display in his account. On the other hand, it is difficult to determine whether he had read the *Westminster Chronicle* or whether he had this information from an eye-witness of Richard's coronation or from hearsay. What Usk did was to distort the innocent historical fact and to read it retrospectively with a political prophecy.[407]

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[404] *Usk*, 3.
[405] *Ibid*., 91.
[406] *The Westminster Chronicle*, 417.
[407] For a discussion of the prophecies in Usk's work, see particularly Stephen Yandell, "Prophetic Authority in Adam of Usk's Chronicle" in *Prophet Margins: The Medieval Vatic Impulse and Social*

This was for Usk a very reasonable narrative strategy because Usk started writing his chronicle after the Lancastrian usurpation, when he was in close contact with Thomas Arundel and Henry IV. Therefore, he possibly wanted to present a pejorative image of Richard. Besides, it should be indicated again that Usk wrote his chronicle in an auto-biographical style. He related events in his chronicle in parallel with the major points in his own life. He did not intend his chronicle to be widely circulated. This can be understood from the fact that there is just one surviving manuscript of his chronicle. His chronicle was unknown until its publication in the nineteenth century. In addition to evidence from the fourth chapter about how he was highly critical about Henrician government, what he wrote about the coronation of Henry IV in his entry for the year of 1413 is the biggest evidence to see that his prophetic account was not a representation of any sort of Lancastrian point of view. Usk points out that Henry IV died as a result of "festering of the flesh." This disease "was foreshadowed at his coronation, for as a result of his anointing then, his head was so infected with lice that his hair fell out, and for several months he had to keep his head covered."[408]

In summary, the coronation accounts in the sources, which have been conventionally called "Lancastrian" chronicles, show us some examples of the use of symbolic and ceremonial elements which can also be detected in the former accounts on Richard II's coronation. This is not to say that chroniclers like Walsingham and Usk were not influenced by the change of the political regime. Their pejorative

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Stability, eds. G.L. Risden, Karen Moranski and Stephen Yandell (New York: Peter Lang, 2004), 79-100.

[408] *Usk*, 243. At this point, it is important to mention shortly about Henry IV's illness, the leprosy, which struck him in 1405 and continued till the end of his life. The existing accounts of the disease in the chronicles such as the *Eulogium* and *An English Chronicle* have constructed a direct relationship between the disease and the execution of Archbishop Scrope as God's retribution. Usk does not write about this. But, considering the fact that he was very sympathetic to Scrope, it is possible to speculate that he was thinking along with the anonymous authors of the *Eulogium* and *An English Chronicle*. For a detailed discussion of Henry's illness, see McNiven, "The Problem of Henry IV's Health," 747-772.

entries on Ricardian kingship represent at best this situation. However, on the coronation issue, their intention was not to present the ostentatious display of kingship to legitimise and propagate the Lancastrian regime. On the other hand, there is no evidence that Henry IV wanted to direct the chronicles for an ostentatious formal display of his coronation. As it has been shown above, his coronation ceremony had many similarities with those of his predecessors. So, in its general sense, we cannot regard the coronation records in the historical writing as a part of Lancastrian propaganda. Rather we should speak of continuity rather than a change.

VI.3 Holy Oil Used in the Coronation of Henry IV

Of all the instruments employed in the coronation of Henry IV, the most innovative practice was the anointment of Henry IV with the Holy Oil of St. Thomas Beckett. According to a legend circulated in the fourteenth century, when Thomas Beckett was in exile due to his conflict with Henry II, as he had prayed in the Church of St. Colombe in Sens, and seen a vision of the Virgin Mary. Mary granted him a golden eagle including "a stone flask filled with oil."[409] According to the prophecy, this oil would be used first in the future for the anointment of a specific king, whose name was not explicitly mentioned. This king would recover English lands, such as Normandy and Aquitane, lost by his predecessors.[410]

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[409] T.A. Sandquist, "The Holy Oil of St. Thomas of Canterbury," *in Essays in Medieval History Presented to Bertie Wilkinson*, eds. T.A. Sandquist and Michael R.Powicke (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1969), 330- 344. Actually, the story goes back to the period of Edward II. From a letter of Pope John XXI to Edward II written in 1318, we learn that Edward II wanted to get the permission of Pope for a second anointing by the so-called Holy Oil of Beckett. Edward was expecting that this anointment would contribute to the sacral image of his kingship in the midst of political troubles and discontents of his time. The pope's reply is interesting. He writes that "this unction does not detract from the first which you received, since the Royal anointing does not impress anything on the soul…" Additionally, he refuses to allow Edward II's anointing by this oil by the hand of a Prelate with a public ceremony. He points that "if it should happen, it must be done secretly and privately; for if it were done publicly, great amazement and scandal might possibly arise therefrom." See "Letter of John XXII to Edward about the Oil of Coronation," in Legg, *English Coronation Records*, 75. There is no evidence about whether Edward II was anointed by Beckett's Holy Oil.

[410] *Ibid*., 332.

Within the limits of this chapter, we should ask whether the employment of the Holy Oil of Beckett was a Lancastrian fabrication and whether the entries in the chronicles were a reflection of this Lancastrianism. The use of the Holy Oil of Beckett in the coronation ceremony of Henry IV has been conventionally thought as one of the elements of the propaganda for Henry IV's reign. On the other hand, the existence of the prophecy has been considered as strong evidence for the Lancastrian perspective of the chroniclers.

These two arguments have been articulated in the modern scholarship. For example, some scholars such as William Stubbs and Gaillard Lapsley claimed that the anointment of the Henry IV with the Holy Oil of Thomas Becket was a play invented to reinforce the legitimacy of Henry IV when he came to the throne. Stubbs especially claimed that the legend of the Holy Oil was fabricated to legitimise the Lancastrian dynasty synchronically with the Crouchback Legend.[411] However, although there have been some criticism of the association of the origin of the legend, there is still a consensus in recent studies on the Lancastrian period that the Holy Oil of Beckett was an instrument of Lancastrian propaganda. As a consequence of this common argumentation, the existing accounts about this legend in Walsingham's works and the *Eulogium* have been readily accepted as an element of Lancastrian propaganda.

This idea occurs in Antonia Gransden's historiographical work on the late medieval English historical-writing. In her work, *Historical Writing in England*, Gransden claims that Walsingham inserted this prophecy "in order to give an especial sanction" to the coronation ceremony of Henry IV.[412] However, both convictions can be easily rejected by internal evidence from both Walsingham's

[411] Stubbs, *Constitutional History*, 11. Lapsley, "Parliamentary Title," 598-599.
[412] Gransden, *Historical Writing*, 141.

Chronica Maiora and the *Eulogium* and by the lack of any supportive evidence for the use of this legend by the Lancastrians to legitimise their dynasty. The entries in some chronicles relating the employment of the Holy Oil of Beckett in the Coronation ceremony of Bolingbroke obviously signify a break from the former practices of ritualistic representations. However, there is no factual evidence for the use of this Holy Oil in the *Parliament Rolls* or in official Lancastrian documentation, such as the *Record and Process*. Although the Continuator of *Eulogium Historiarum* told about Holy Oil of Beckett, the most vivid description of coronation with Holy Oil and its story occur in Walsingham's chronicle. We can see the fullest account of the story in Walsingham's history.

> On the feast of the translation of St Edward, king and confessor [13 October], King Henry IV was crowned at Westminster by the hands of Thomas [Arundel], archbishop of Canterbury, this being the very day on which a year ago he had been banished into exile. This, so men thought, could not have happened without a divine miracle. And as an auspice of what was believed would be a richer grace for him in the future, he was anointed with that heavenly oil, which once the blessed Mary, mother of God, entrusted to the blessed Thomas [Becket], martyr and archbishop of Canterbury, while he was in exile, prophesying to him that the kings of England who were anointed with this oil would be champions of the church and men of benevolence. For long ages it had lain hid, preserved in a golden eagle with its stone flask, but at last it had been miraculously brought into the light of day, when Lord Henry, first duke of Lancaster, was fighting the wars of his king in lands across the sea. For the eagle had been given to him personally by a holy man,who had found it by divine revelation. The duke gave it to the noble Prince Edward [the BlackPrince], the eldest son of the illustrious Edward [III], king of England, so that after the death of his father he might be anointed as king with this oil. The prince put the oil in the Tower of London, storing it in a chest secured by many padlocks. And there it remained hidden, either through forgetfulness or through neglect, right until the time of King Richard, son of the noble Prince Edward.[413]

In the following paragraphs of his chronicle, Walsingham's account acquires a Lancastrian form. Walsingham points to Richard's desire to be anointed with the

[413] Walsingham, *Chronica Maiora*, 312.

Holy Oil of Beckett, only to be refused by Arundel. Arundel replied that this was the right of any other king in the future, who would deserve to be anointed by this Holy Oil. In this sense, the holy oil prophecy turns into an anti-Ricardian and pro-Lancastrian story. The quotation below displays this fact.

> In 1399 King Richard had been curiously examining the objects left to him by his ancestors, and had unexpectedly come across the eagle with its flask, together with a writing or prophecy of the blessed martyr Thomas, and learning of the great virtue possessed by the oil, he asked Thomas [Arundel], archbishop of Canterbury, to anoint him a second time with this oil. But the archbishop absolutely refused to do this, saying that it was sufficient for the king that at his original coronation he had received the holy oil at his hands, and that it was not right to repeat the anointing. King Richard took the eagle and the flask with him when setting out for Ireland and also when returning again to this land. At the archbishop's request he had handed the eagle and the flask to him at Chester, saying that it was now patently clear to him that it was not the divine will that he should be anointed with this oil, but that such a noble sacrament was destined for another. And the archbishop had religiously kept such precious objects under careful guard and had preserved them right up to the time of the coronation of the present king, who was the first of the kings of England to be anointed with so precious a liquid.[414]

As can be seen from this quotation, it is very clear that Walsingham consciously changed the story into a Lancastrian one after Henry's usurpation. Walsingham makes this by distorting a well-known fact. He writes that Richard demanded anointment by Thomas Arundel, the archbishop of Canterbury. But, we know that in 1399 before the usurpation, Arundel was in exile and the Archbishop of Canterbury was Roger Walden, who was one of the most important figures of Ricardian regime. It is impossible to imagine that Walsingham did not know this fact.

In spite of the evidence given above, Walsingham's association of the legend with Bolingbroke does not necessarily make his account a part of Lancastrian

[414] *Ibid.,* 312.

propaganda. On the one hand, he was reporting the story that he had been told. On the other hand, we know how he changed his accounts in parallel with the hand-over of the regime from example cited in the previous chapters. In this sense, the insertion of this entry may be read as merely Walsingham's attempt to be compatible with the Lancastrian dynasty. He may have added this entry to praise Henry IV by giving his coronation a divine meaning considering the fact that he completed his chronicle in 1420s under the Lancastrian reign. On the other hand, a more significant fact forces us to reconsider the assertion that Walsingham related this story for the newly invented Lancastrian propaganda. As we can understand from the passage, Walsingham knew very well the existence of the legend throughout the reigns of Edward III and Richard II. Thus even his awareness of the story does invalidate Lancastrian propaganda claims.

So, what might be the reason why Walsingham inserted this story in his chronicle? I would argue that this has not come from any kind of Lancastrianism. The answer can be found in his personal connections and readings. We know that, as a chronicler who spent much of his life in St.Albans, Walsingham was not an eye-witness to most of the events he narrated. For this reason, he drew upon heavily either upon the first-hand reports of the people around him or on some documentary sources. Since he was a monastic chronicler, he may have received the information of the anointment of Henry IV from one of his friends close to Thomas Arundel, the archbishop of Canterbury. This is a strong possibility because it is claimed that Arundel anointed Bolingbroke with Holy Oil. Besides, in another source, Arundel is called "Thomas as the successor of St.Thomas Becket."[415] On the other hand, as T.Sandquist has indicated, this prophecy was one of several popularly associated

[415] Lesley A. Coote, *Prophecy and Public Affairs in Later Medieval England* (York: York Medieval Press, 2000), 96.

with St. Thomas Beckett in the fourteenth century.[416] He may have accessed the available documents related to this prophecy.[417]

As stated above, apart from this passage from Walsingham's chronicle, the entries on the anointment of Henry IV by the Holy Oil of Beckett occur also in the *Eulogium* and in *An English Chronicle*, which depends heavily on the *Eulogium*. For the motivation behind the *Eulogium*'s entry, the same points, argued for Walsingham, could be articulated. Like Walsingham, the compiler of the *Eulogium* was not an eye-witness of the coronation of Henry IV. In addition, he was a monk from Canterbury. These were sufficient reasons for inserting this entry into his chronicle. Unlike Walsingham, the compiler of the *Eulogium* does not give a detailed description of the legend. He simply writes that "King Henry was crowned by Thomas Arundel... And he was the first to be anointed with that oil."[418] But, in another part of the chronicle, there is very strong evidence for the awareness of the compiler about the circulation of the prophecy long before the Lancastrian usurpation. One of these belongs to the Ricardian period and, as evident in Walsingham's chronicle, it shows that Richard also knew very well about the legend of Holy Oil at least in the latter years of his reign. According to the entry in the *Eulogium*, in 1399, before Richard II went to his Irish expedition, he wanted to visit St. Thomas in Canterbury.

> Then he brought back the king to London. The king entered the Tower, and took along all the precious objects deposed there by his

[416] Sandquist, "The Holy Oil", 331-332.The author gives a list of the original manuscripts of this prophecy in this article. For example, Bodleian Ashmole Manuscript, MS. 1393.

[417] Besides, from a document of correspondance between the pope XXII and Edward II in 1318, it is very clear that the Holy Oil legend had been known very well long before the coronation of Henry IV. Edward II's letter to pope, which shows his desire for a second anointment by the Holy Oil, is lost. But, Pope's response is available. In the letter, the Pope gives the details of the prophecy, although he does not refer to any particular text and points that if Edward wanted a second anointment, this had to be kept secretly. For the document see Legg, *English Coronation Records*, 69-76. As can be seen in Walsingham's text, he refers to Richard II's desire but there is no mention of Edward II's demand.

[418] "Rex Henricus Quartus coronatur a Thoma de Arundell, unctus cum oleo aquilae innotatae. Et erat primus qui cum oleo illo ungebatur." *Eulogium*, 384.

> predecessors. There he also found a golden eagle with a stone phial enclosed in it. Accompanying the eagle was a note saying that the Blessed Virgin had delivered it to a rejoicing St Thomas, Archbishop of Canterbury, and declared: "The good kings of England in the future will be anointed with the oil from this phial, and one of them will recover without violence the land that had been lost by his relatives, and will become great among kings, and build many churches in the Holy Land, and chase away all the heathen from Babylon, where he will build many churches. And as long as he carries the eagle on his chest he will have victory over his enemies, and his kingdom will be continuously enlarged. The eagle will be found in an opportune time, and the anointing of the kings of England over the head of the heathen will be the cause of the finding of this eagle.[419]

Like this long quotation, internal evidence from the *Eulogium* itself demonstrates the awareness of the compiler about the holy oil. Its entry for the year of 1220 refutes the claim that the legend was invented by the Lancastrians. The account reads as follows:

> This is the unction with which the kings of England should be anointed, not these however, since they are evil, but others who will recover this land lost through sin, and will put it firmly into the right mold. It is the first English king to be anointed with this unction that will restore the land lost by his ancestors, namely Normandy and Aquitane. Indeed this one will be the greatest among the kings of England. He will subdue the heathen in the Holy Land and build churches in Babylon. Provided that he carries the eagle with the phial on his chest, he will not find the power of his enemies redoubtable.[420]

Examples from the chronicles can be taken as internal evidence for my argument. Both Walsingham and the compiler of the *Eulogium* were familiar with the Holy Oil story since the legend was widely circulated especially in the thirteenth

[419] "Rex intravit Turrim, et omnia jocalia pretiosa a preadecessoribus suis ibidem reposita tulit secum, ubi et invenit aquilam auream et ampullam lapideam in ea clausam, cum quadam scriptura dicente quod Beata Virgo tradidit ilam Sancto Thomae Cantuariensi archiepiscopo tunc exulanti, dicens quod "de oleo hujus ampullae boni Reges futuri Anglorum ungerentur, et unus eorum terram a parentibus amissam sine vi recuperabit, et erit magnus inter reges et aedificabit multas ecclesias in Terra Sancta et fugabit omnes Paganos a Babylonia, ubi plures ecclesias aedificabit. Et quotiens portabit aquilam in pectore suo victoriam habebit de inimicis suis, et regnum ejus semper augmentabitur.Et invenietur in tempore opportuno.Et unctio Regum Anglorum in caput Paganorum erit causa inventionis hujus aquilae." *Ibid.*, 380.

[420] "Ista est unctio cum qua debent inungi reges Angliae, sed non isti, quia maligni, sed alii qui terram istam amissam per peccatum recuperabunt, et in formam rectam solidabunt. Est autem rex Angliae futurus qui primo inungetur ista unctione, qui terram amissam per parentes, scilicet Normanniam, Aquitaniam, recuperabit. Erit enim iste maximus inter reges Angliae. In Terra Sancta Paganos subjugabit. In Babylonia ecclesias aedificabit. Dummodo aquilam cum ampulla portat in pectore, non dubitabitde inimicorum fortitudine." *Eulogium*, Vol: I, 406-407.

and fourteenth centuries as Sandquist has indicated. Besides, they were religious men and could access information about the texts related to the prophecies. My two arguments, that the chroniclers did not actually aim to propogate a prophetic account of Bolingbroke's coronation and that the Lancastrians did not try to use the chroniclers for the invention of this prophecy can be supported by evidence from other chronicles.

We can see the absence of this event in the other chroniclers of the period. For example, the contemporary chronicles of the period such as the *Brut* and the *London Chronicles*, though they touch upon the coronation of Bolingbroke even though in a very limited sense, write nothing about the Holy Oil. In addition, Adam Usk does not refer to the Holy Oil legend despite the fact that he was an eye-witness of the coronation of Bolingbroke. Besides, his account shows that he was not told about it. Usk's work includes some representational entries on this event. Besides, we know from the chapter on the succession problem that Usk wrote about the Crouchback legend although he stood against this claim. Yet, he did not write about the Holy Oil prophecy. This seems also odd considering the fact that Usk did give space to some other political prophecies in his chronicle. Furthermore, when we look at the accounts of the coronations of Henry V and Henry VI in the chronicles of these kings such as the *Gesta Henrici Quinti*, *Metrical Chronicle* of Thomas Elmham and *Gregory's Chronicle*, we cannot find any reference to the use of Holy Oil in the coronation ceremonies of Lancastrian kings.[421] On the other hand, we know that the Duke of York in the Parliament of 1460 "felt obliged to counter the Crouchback

[421] The mere exception is John Capgrave's history, which was written in the later Lancastrian period. But, as we can see from his chronicle, many entries in his chronicle are the exact copies of Walsingham's chronicle. Cited from, 330- 344, at 341. See also John Capgrave, *Chronicle of England*, ed. F.C. Hingeston (London: Longman, 1858), 273-274. It should also be pointed out that Fortescue, although he was a Lancastrian jurist and political theorist during late Lancastrian period, does not employ this prophecy to counter the Yorkists. See, Sansquist, "The Holy Oil," 341. The Yorkist kings were also coronated by this Holy Oil. For evidence see J.W. McKenna, "The Coronation Oil of the Yorkist Kings," *English Historical Review* 82 (1967), 102-104.

legend before the lords" but he did not develop any argument against the Holy Oil prophecy.[422] If this story had been known and circulated widely for Lancastrian propaganda purposes, he would certainly have produced counter-arguments against it.

In summary, all these facts demonstrate that the Holy Oil story was not very important for the chronicles and it was not invented for Lancastrian propaganda through formal representation of kingship. As it has been discussed above, why Walsingham and the compiler of the *Eulogium* wrote about this legend did not come from their propagandistic and Lancastrian perspective. Their preferences have been determined by their personal interests and connections. Secondly, the facts that the Holy Oil story was widely known before and Edward II had formerly wanted to be anointed with this Holy Oil of Beckett refute the Lancastrian invention claim. Lastly, it should be pointed out, when we look at the official Lancastrian *Record and Process* and the other documents such as the *Parliament Rolls*, there is no evidence about the Holy Oil. For this reason, they did not seem to consider the use of Holy Oil for the ostentatious display of their dynasty and propogation of the legitimacy of their dynasty.

VI.4 Formal Display of Henry V

When looked at the formal display of Henry V's kingship, the representational evidence cannot be properly inferred from the coronation accounts in the chronicles. We can easily observe the scarcity of the detailed accounts of Henry V's coronation. The chroniclers did not focus on the formalities of the coronation ceremony and the ostentatious display of Henry V in these parts of their works. In the case of Henry

[422] Sandquist,"The Holy Oil," 341.

IV, I have discussed the possible formal reasons about why the *Brut* and *London Chronicles* did not give much space to the coronation of the Lancastrian kings although they have been compiled heavily on the basis of the eye-witness accounts. However, the situation looks somewhat odd when we look at the major chronicles of Henry V's reign. From the evidence indicated in the previous chapters, it is clear that some of these chroniclers, such as the anonymous author of the *Gesta* and Thomas Elmham wrote very eulogistically about Henry V. Together with Adam Usk, they were possibly eye-witnesses of Henry V's coronation. In addition, we also know very well that Walsingham recorded the coronations of Richard II and Henry IV in a detailed way. However, there are no significant passages displaying the formal representation of Henry V in the chronicles. As Christopher Allmand has indicated, "relatively little is known" about the ceremonies of Henry V's coronation.[423] So, why did the chroniclers avoid giving the ostentatious formal display of Henry V's coronation?

In the previous chapter, I have given some examples from the chronicles showing how the authors commonly recorded stormy and snowy weather in the coronation day of Henry V. It was both hindsight and the recording of genuine weather conditions. They interpreted this weather as a sign of the change in the character of the new king.[424] In Walsingham's words, when Henry V was crowned, "he suddenly became a different man."[425] So, their narrative for the coronation day was not shaped by a desire to give a formal display of the coronation. It can be argued that this preference of the chroniclers, the relationship between the weather condition and the change of Henry V's character, in the construction of the narrative has been determined by the actual political situation, the political crisis and conflict

[423] Allmand, *Henry V*, 64.
[424] The examples from the chronicles on this issue have already been shown in Chapter IV.
[425] Walsingham, *Chronica Maiora*, 389. This change is also recorded in the *Brut*, 593.

between Henry V and his father, Henry IV, which can be traced back to the period after 1406, which I discussed in the previous chapter. These were the cause of anxiety for the chroniclers as well as their desire for recording the events. On the other hand, it shows us that Henry V did not deliberately direct the chronicles for his ostentatious display. As a king, whose legitimacy was not a subject of discussion; Henry did not need to appropriate chronicles for an ostentatious display of his coronation. The lack of any recording of the Holy Oil legend in the chronicles, at the same time, would confirm this view.[426]

VI.5 Henry's Royal Entry after the Battle of Agincourt

However, unlike the lack of a detailed narrative of the coronation ceremony, almost all chronicles of the reign of Henry V extensively recorded his royal entry into London after the Battle of Agincourt in 1415. It is well-known that this defeat of the French was the greatest victory of the English over the French throughout the fifteenth century and has become the cause of the historical reputation of Henry V as a king.[427] Not only this event, but also the accounts of the event in the chronicles have been traditionally regarded as Lancastrian propaganda. For example, one of the most recent studies on the royal entry of Henry V, although it actually deals with the meaning of the liturgical elements in this entry, writes without any evidence that the the themes about the entry in the *Gesta* presents that it was a "Lancastrian product."[428] In the following discussion, I will examine this conviction about the chronicle accounts of this event.

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[426] There is only one piece of evidence that the Holy Oil was used in the coronation of Henry V. This is a document about coronation. Bodley Ms 117, fo.68v. Cited from Allmand, *Henry V*, 65.
[427] The best most recent modern work on the Battle of Agincourt is Cury, *the Battle of Agincourt*.
[428] Tolmie, "Henry V's Royal Entry," in *Propogation of Power* eds. Gosman, Vanderjagt and Veenstra, 363-382. In this part on the royal entry of Henry V, I did not use the *Brut* and the *London Chronicles* because their accounts are very brief and not much useful.

It is true that, of the chronicles written during the reign of Henry V, the author of the *Gesta* gives the most detailed and eulogistic narrative of this event. The author relates the event around the themes of the heroic kingship of Henry V, the public support for Henry's French campaign, and divine aid for Henry and the English as God's chosen people. A discussion of these themes is not the subject of this thesis but some instances from the *Gesta* can be cited to show their predominance throughout the text. For example, at the beginning, he writes that

> and the citizens, having heard the greatly longed-for, nay indeed most joyful, news of his arrival, had in the meantime made ready themselves and their city, as far as the time available allowed, for the reception of the most loving and most beloved prince whom God of His mercy had so gloriously and marvellously brought back home in triumph from a rebellious and stubborn people.[429]

The anonymous author underlines the happiness of the Londoners for Henry V for his victory and normally uses an aggressive language against the French, the external enemy, as it can also be detected throughout his work. He also gives the formal display of Henry. He writes that, as the citizens were thanking to God for this victory," the king followed with his own, though only quite modest, retinue."[430] The following account about the reception of Henry V is full of some visual details such as how the city was garnished with some symbols like the arms of St. George, St. Edward, and St. Edmund or how the citizens adorned the Tower with the scripts including the names of twelve apostles "together with twelve kings of the succession, martyrs and confessors..." [431] In another place of his account, it is possible to see a formal display of Henry V: "…the king… proceeded, not in exalted pride… but with

[429] *Gesta*, 102-103.
[430] Ibid, 10
[431] *Ibid*, 107.

an impassive countenance and at a dignified pace, and with only a few of the most trusted members of his household in attendance…"[432]

Given some elements of the description of the event, should we necessarily consider the account available in the *Gesta* as Lancastrian propaganda? At first, it should be noted that the most important aspect which makes the narrative of the *Gesta* distinctive, are the details of the event and they cannot be found in the other chronicles of the period though they do give some space to the narrative of Henry's reception by the Londoners. This seems the chief reason why its account has been regarded as a Lancastrian product. However, I think, this is not unusual considering the fact that the author of the *Gesta* was himself a participant in the Battle of Agincourt and came to London with Henry. He was certainly an eye-witness of the whole episode. However, there is no evidence that the Lancastrians wanted him to record the event for propaganda purposes. On the other hand, I have already indicated that the author of the *Gesta* did not write his chronicle for propagandistic purposes and there was no circulation of this biographical work- there are just two surviving copies of this work as I have indicated before.

Another eulogistic chronicle of Henry's reign, Thomas Elmham's *Liber Metricus*, gives some space to a description of the royal entry of Henry V into London. For example, he writes that

> For the king who advanced from Agincourt to London, the rejoicing citizens prepared fine things worthy of note. Glittering clothes, not clothes of clay, adorned most of those present there, the rest being old people and children below twelve. Twenty thousand attended in retinue: each and every knight was observed in the plain of Blakheth,in an order in which all could show themselves on the king's way: everywhere glory, praise and honor was offered to God.[433]

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[432] *Ibid*, 113.

[433] Regi Londonias ab Agincort advenienti/cives jocundi pulchra notanda parant/majorem, reliquos seniores bis duodenos/Lucea, non lutea, vestis adornat ibi/millia vicena per sectam concomitantur/Blakheth planitie quisque notatur eques/Ordine quo cuncti praebebant obvia Regi/Gloria, laus et honor fertur ubique deo. Elmham, *Liber Metricus*, 125.

It is very difficult to know whether Elmham was an eye-witness of the event. Like Walsingham, he was a monk and possibly acquired his information from the eye-witness accounts or written sources. The similarities of the many accounts about different subjects, in his work urge us to speculate whether he used the *Gesta* as the primary source for his chronicle.[434] On the other hand, the internal evidence in his chronicle refutes the general conviction that his accounts were a Lancastrian propaganda product. As I have indicated in the introduction of this thesis, he states very clearly that his aim in writing his work was not the wide circulation of the piece but to reach learned men who would appreciate fully the policies and actions of Henry V.[435]

Moreover, Adam Usk's account on the royal entry resembles very much that of the *Gesta* and *Liber Metricus*. Nearly all the descriptions of the entry available in the *Gesta* and *Liber Metricus* can also be observed in his chronicle. Due to this fact, I think, it is not much necessary to give a detailed illustration of what Usk wrote on this. As an example, it can be indicated that Usk comments that on the day of the entry "the city wore its brightest aspect, and happiness filled the people - and rightly so."[436] Additionally, his chronicle includes the carol of Agincourt, an anonymous lyrical poem to celebrate the triumph of Henry V, which was written sometime after the Battle of Agincourt and widely popular throughout the fifteenth century.[437] Why Usk gave much space to the royal entry in his chronicle was a result of the fact that he was possibly an eye-witness of the event. From the critical entries about the Lancastrian kingship in his chronicle I have discussed in the previous chapters, it is

[434] Taylor and Roskell, "Introduction," in the *Gesta*, xv-xlix.
[435] Elmham, *Liber Metricus*, 73.
[436] *Usk*, 259-263.
[437] Cury, *The Battle of Agincourt*, 280.

very obvious that he always kept his distance from the Lancastrian dynasty and it is not much possible to think his descriptions as part of Lancastrian propaganda attempt. Besides, it should be indicated that Adam Usk wrote the last portion of his chronicle after 1415, when Henry V's status as a military hero was well-established.

As for Walsingham, though he is the most important authority for Henry V's reign, he does not give much place to the royal entry of the king into London. This may be regarded in itself as an evidence for why his entry cannot be taken simply as a part of Lancastrian propaganda. Walsingham, like the author of the *Gesta* and Elmham, indicates the happiness of the Londoners when Henry returned back from the Battle of Agincourt. His account in the St.Albans chronicle reads as follows:

> We do not have the eloquence to express fully the joy, the jubilation, and finally the sense of triumph with which the king was received by the people of London when consideration is given to the difficulties he had experienced over equipment, the enormous expense of the campaign, and the variety of scenarios, all of which demanded special handling."[438]

In the following lines, Walsingham relates that Henry came to the the church of St.Paul's and there he was received "with great ceremony by twelve mitred bishops who met him in the procession and led him to the high altar."[439] According to Walsingham, after king made his prayer, he had passed through the centre of London. This is the rough summary of what Walsingham recorded about the royal entry of Henry V.

At first it should be noted that unlike the author of the *Gesta* and Usk, Walsingham was not an eye-witness to this event. As was the case in many of his accounts, he acquired some of the information for his works from the sources such as the other eye-witnesses, who were sometimes coming to St.Albans from London. On the other hand, the newsletters, which were widely circulated by the central

[438] *The St.Albans Chronicle*, 683.
[439] *Ibid*., 685.

government and functioned to give information about the external affairs such as the Battle of Agincourt, were other important sources for Walsingham.[440] Walsingham might have reached an account of this event through one of these sources, either from the eye-witness accounts or the newsletters. But, there is no evidence to assert that the Lancastrian government ordered the production of any kind of official text for the propagation of Henry V's royal entry into London.

Secondly, it is also possible to detect the account of Richard II's royal entry into London in 1392 in Walsingham's works. Walsingham did not omit the description of this event from his chronicle though he had very strong anti-Ricardian sentiments. The description of Richard's entry into London resembles closely to his narrative of Henry V's reception in 1415 and reads as follows:

> … 'I shall go to London and comfort the people; no longer shall I allow them to despair of my favour.' As soon as this decision became known, all the citizens were filled with incredible happiness. One and all they decided to meet him together and to spend as much on presents and gifts as they had done at his coronation. And so on his arrival at London, the king was greeted with the sort of splendid procession and the variety of different offerings that would have been fitting for a king holding a triumph to receive. Horses with their trappings, gold and silver tablets, clothes of gold and silk, golden basins and ewers, gold coins, jewels and necklaces were all given to him, a splendid collection of such richness and beauty that its total price and value could not be easily reckoned.[441]

Given the illustration of the internal evidence in the chronicles and the discussion about how they had access to information about the royal entry of Henry as well as the intention of the chroniclers in telling of the event, it is possible to assert that the motivation of the chroniclers was not propagandistic but just the recording of this ostentatious event. On the other hand, these entries can be regarded as the illustration of the civic processions and pageantries, which can be commonly

[440] Clark, "Introduction," in Walsingham, *Chronica Maiora*, 15.
[441] *Ibid*., 288.

detected in the late medieval English chronicles. This point will be discussed below in the part related to coronation of Henry VI. Therefore, it is sufficient just to say this here.

On the other hand, it is necessary to ask whether Henry V wanted to make an ostentatious formal representation of himself and his victory. I think that the situation was similar to the event of the gathering of the people in Westminster Hall for the Parliament meeting declaring the deposition of Richard II that I have discussed in Chapter 3. Likewise it seems that the royal entry was propaganda in itself, and the Lancastrians officials carefully managed this through visual means such as biblical allusions.[442]

This was relying upon some valid reasons. Firstly, it is very clear that the victory at the Battle of Agincourt and the reception of the glorious king through visual elements would contribute to the justification of the campaign against France and would be a reply to those, who were opposing the campaign because of the financial burden it imposed on the subjects of the king.[443] Secondly, the royal entry, with the visual elements employed, would be a symbol of national awareness - though the concept of "nation" that we know is very modern and problematic for the late medieval context - of the English and would function for "further co-operation between king and people for their joint good and honour."[444] Lastly, the visual representation of this event was very important in order to strengthen Henry V's personal image as a military hero and glorious king because it was believed that his just cause against the French, the help of God in the French campaign and the power of his personal character were the reasons for his victory.

[442] For example, in the *Gesta* it is possible to see the comparison of Henry V to King David and that of London to Jerusalem. *Gesta*, 115-111.
[443] Jacob, *The Fifteenth Century*, 121-133.
[444] Allmand, *Henry V*, 408.

VI: 6 Formal Display of Henry VI

The third case I have chosen for this chapter is the royal entry of Henry VI into London in 1432 after his coronation in France in 1431. There is a valid reason for this choice. The coronation ceremonies of Henry VI have been recorded by nearly all of the chronicles of the period. This is very normal since all chronicles naturally have recorded the important events. But, it should be noted that they have not taken place much in the limited number of the chronicles written during the reign of Henry VI. However, the chronicles have given considerable place to the royal entry of the king in 1432 when he returned back from France. In this sense, this case resembles very much to that of the approach of the chroniclers to the coronation and the royal entry of Henry V into London after his French campaign. As it was the case for the chronicles of both Henry IV's and Henry V's reigns, not only the event but also the accounts of the chronicles in this case have conventionally been regarded as part of Lancastrian propaganda.[445] This claim will be criticised below.

Before the discussion of the evidence in the chronicles, it is necessary to tell the significance of the two coronations of Henry VI and his royal entry into London in 1432. These events were important owing to some distinguishing reasons. It is known that Henry VI's father and the king of France, Charles VI, signed the Treaty of Troyes in 1420 by which they decided on the union of two crowns "which would rule two sovereign and independent kingdoms."[446] King Henry VI, the son of Henry V and Charles VI's daughter, Catherine, was born in 1421 and became the king of

[445] Griffiths, *The Reign of Henry VI*, 222. Griffiths claim that the accounts of the ceremonies have been told in detail in the contemporary chronicles. This does not seem true as looked at the evidence in them. For the claim of Lancastrian distortion of the facts for textual propaganda. See Strohm, *England's Empty Throne*, 195.

[446] Dorothy Styles and Christopher T. Allmand, "The Coronations of Henry VI" *History Today* 32 (1982), 28-33.

England when he was just ten months old. He was crowned in 1429 in Westminster and then in 1431 in Paris. After his coronation, he came back to England in 1432 by a magnificent pageantry. Both coronations,- as I have indicated before all coronations include propagandistic elements- and his royal entry were propaganda events scrupulously arranged by the Lancastrians similar to the coronation ceremony of Henry IV and the royal entry of Henry V after the Battle of Agincourt.

The Lancastrian government's attitude derived from the fact that Henry VI's legitimacy as the king of France was the subject of discussion. The French side was divided on the issue. Some of them accepted the kingship of Henry VI particularly because of the political stability that the English brought to France after the dynastic wars between the Burgundians and Armagnacs. Some others were thinking that the crown was the right of Dauphin Charles, the eldest son of Charles VI. The result of this was the war. The military situation in the late 1420s was not very good for the English. They failed in the siege of the strategic town of Orleans in the May of 1429 and in July; the Dauphin was crowned as the king of France.[447] In this sense, the timing of Henry's coronation was striking. His first coronation in England took place just a few months after that of the Dauphin's. The Lancastrians wished to use the propaganda methods to reassert Henry VI's right "to the French crown and his authority over the kingdom through the symbolism of a coronation ceremony."[448] Henry was the king of both countries. For this reason, his authority had to be emphasised by two coronation ceremonies both in England and France, respectively. The Lancastrians, employed various means to underline the authority of Henry VI. For instance, the new Anglo-Gallic coinage of Henry VI was minted, which include the shields of both England and France. The new ordinances were enacted pointing

[447] *Ibid.,* 28-33.
[448] *Ibid*., 28-33.

to "the severe punishments for any who referred to the Armagnac enemy as the 'French'"[449] Besides, the Lancastrians commissioned Lawrance Calot, who was Anglo-French, for the writing of the geneology and poem in French language.[450]

The Lancastrian propaganda was not only used to influence the French. To manipulate the domestic public opinion, which had some discontents because of the financial burden of it on the English, about the English campaigns in France, the Lancastrians also employed some means. For example, the Lancastrians commissioned the English poet, John Lydgate, to write poems including the theme of dual monarchy to influence the educated and literate sections of the society.[451] In addition to these, the coronation ceremonies and the royal pageantries were effective devices of propaganda and were deliberately used by the central government, as can be observed in the two coronation ceremonies and royal entry of Henry VI into London. Considering this context, the accounts in the chronicles of the period should be analysed.

Of the chronicles of the reign of Henry VI, the *Brut*, reflects the anxieties and doubts when Henry VI came to the throne after his father's death-this can be observed in the other chronicles of the period; after all, Henry VI's infancy was a fact. It records that Henry the sixth was a "childe & not fully A yere olde."[452] The anonymous author goes on and points that "This king, beying in his Cradel, was moche doubted & dradd" because of the great conquests of his father and the wisdom of his uncles, the Duke of Gloucester and the Duke of Bedford.[453] This entry somewhat resembles the chroniclers' doubts when Henry V came to the throne. This

[449] J.W. McKenna, "Henry VI of England and the Dual Monarchy: Aspects of Royal Propaganda, 1422-1432," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 28 (1965), 145-162.
[450] *Ibid*., 145-162.
[451] Walter Franz Schirmer, *John Lydgate: A Study in the Culture of the XV. Century* (Westport: Methuen, 1965), 140.
[452] *Brut*, 447.
[453] *Ibid*., 447.

is perceptible because when Henry VI became the king of both countries, he was a child in a cradle. In the following pages, the *Brut* includes a detailed account of Henry's coronation ceremonies both in England and France. Its account has no distinguishing characteristics because it does not tell us any kind of striking or different observation about the coronation ceremony.

In its account about the coronation of Henry VI in England, the anonymous author of the *Brut* records that "on Seynt Leonarde day, King Henre, beynge vij yere old of Age, was crowned at Westmynester…"[454] About the coronation of Henry VI in France, likewise, it points that Henry VI was crowned King of France at Paris and mentions about some known traditional elements of the coronation ceremonies. Then, he goes on telling about the other events, which occurred during the reign of Henry VI. The *Brut*, in prose, unlike the verse narrative of the event visible in the *London Chronicles* that I will illustrate below, devotes much place to the reception of Henry VI. It underlines the enthusiasm of the Londoners when Henry VI came to the city: " And all the communialite of the Cite were clothed in white…And all they hoved still on horsbak on the Blak-Heth in Kent, on both sides, as a street, vunto the Kynges coming."[455]

When looked at the manuscripts of the *London Chronicles* edited by Kingsford and Thorney, like the *Brut'*s account, they merely record the event that the coronation of the king took place in Paris and tells something on the coronation ceremony. The distinctive aspect of the manuscripts of the *London Chronicles* is that they give large space to the triumphal entry of Henry VI into London after his coronation in France and the description of the event is written in the verse form. In both texts, in almost the same words, the *London Chronicles* mention about Henry

[454] *Ibid*., 450.
[455] *Ibid*., 462.

VI's entry into London. The themes of the verses look like the prose accounts of the royal entry of Henry V into London I have discussed before. The verse accounts include the themes such as the piety, strength and wisdom of the king with classical and biblical allusions, which are not dominant in the account of the *Brut*. For example, the verse describes the entry of Henry VI as such:

> The citetizens thrugh oute the Citee
> Halowed that day with grete solempynte
> And like for Davyd after his victorie
> Rejoised thane was all Jerusalem
> So this Cite with laude pris and glorye
> For Joye moustred like the sonne Beme
> To yeve ensample thrugh oute this Reme
> All of assente who so can conseyve
> Their noble kynge were gladde to ressyve.[456]

Another chronicle of the period, *Gregory's Chronicle* not only offers a full account of royal entry of Henry into London but also provides the most detailed account of his coronation ceremony in France in detail. In his account of the coronation of Henry VI in France, he emphasises the hereditary right of the Henry as being the king of both England and France.

> To the here vj Harry we present to the youre syghte
> Shechythe youre grace on hym
> Thys tendyr and whythe vertu hym avaunce,
> Borne by dyscent and tytylle of right
> Justely to raygne in Ingelonde and yn Fraunce.[457]

When the chroniclers of the period are searched, one of the interesting points is that one of the most important chronicles for the reign of Henry VI, *An English Chronicle*, although he gives very helpful information about the events relating to the last years of Henry VI's reign, does not tell us anything about the triumphal entry of

[456] *The Great Chronicle*, 157. *Chronicles of London*, 101-115.
[457] *Historical Collections*, 170.

Henry VI after his coronation in France. He merely records that he "wasse crovned in Paris the x yere of his regne, the ix day off Decembre…"[458]

From the evidence that I illustrated above, what can be suggested about the intentions of the chroniclers in putting these entries on the coronation of Henry VI and his triumphal entry into London? It has already been indicated that the compiler of the *Brut* does not comment on the event and just records the details of the event as an eye-witness. The *Brut*, as I have indicated throughout this thesis, does not give the detailed narrative of the events. Its entries are very short and the main intention of the compilers is just the recording of the facts. Another reason for why the compilers told about such visual events is that the *Brut*, in a sense, has been designed in the form of national history to give information to its public readers. The civic processions and the coronation ceremonies were the important part of civic life throughout the Middle Ages and the compilers of the *Brut*, as the inhabitants of London, fully recorded this event.

As for *An English Chronicle*, it is known that it is a chronicle in the tradition of the *Brut*. However, its compiler was not interested in the coronation ceremonies and the reception of Henry VI in his narrative. Actually, in a general sense, its entries include much more concrete and useful evidence for better understanding of the period but it should be noted that its entries especially for the period Henry VI was finalised during the last years of Henry and the early years of Yorkist king, Edward IV. On the other hand, from other accounts, which include the criticism of Henry's governance, it is very obvious that the anonymous author of the chronicle

[458] *An English Chronicle*, 59. Since there is not much usable information in John Hardyng's chronicle about the pegeantry and coronations, I did not illustrate the entries from it. Hardyng seems not to have an interest in these events most probably because of the fact that he completed his work under the influence of Yorkist king, Edward IV. See *Hardyng's Chronicle*, 394-395.

avoid reporting the ostentatious display of Henry's coronations and his entry into London.

The compilers of the *London Chronicles*, as the inhabitants of London, and William Gregory, were the eye-witnesses of the events, which have taken place in London and their main intention was to record the significant events for the history of their city. This can be an explanation why they gave the details of the triumphal entry of Henry into London. Additionally, it should be indicated that the verses about royal entry of Henry VI are almost identical to John Lydgate's poem, - a Lancastrian poet commissioned by Henry V and then the uncles of Henry VI for writing poems to praise the Lancastrians - entitled "Henry VI's Entry into London" with some minor changes.[459] This shows that they employed Lydgate as a source for their accounts of this event. However, as discussed in the previous chapters, there are no grounds to evaluate their entries as Lancastrian propaganda. The historians were not commissioned to write these pieces. Their intention was just the recording of a propagandistic event.

The discussion throughout this chapter has shown that the main intention of the chroniclers was not the propagandistic formal representation of Lancastrian kings. They recorded the events which they regarded important, selecting according to their individual motivations, point of views or interests as they wished. Therefore, their approach can be called as the media representation of the event. However, this does not mean that the Lancastrian kings did not wish to use the means of public display for their purposes. Although Henry IV's style of kingship was more modest than that of Richard II, he certainly benefited from the advantages of formal display to underline the legitimacy of his kingship. Henry V's kingly style was precisely

[459] For comparison see John Lydgate, "Henry VI's Triumphal Entry into London," in John Lydgate, *Mummings and Entertainments* ed. Claire Sponsler (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 2010).

different. He always liked the ostentatious display of kingship and used the means of formal display on all occasions. Henry VI was a child king when he was crowned and entered into London - but we know from his later years, simplicity and piety without ostentatious display of himself were the characteristics of his kingship. Therefore, his regent and uncle, John Bedford designed and managed the Lancastrian propaganda through formal display particularly against the French.

Furthermore, it should be indicated that events such as coronations and royal entries were an effective means of visual propaganda for governments throughout the Middle Ages because they were very useful devices for the kings to influence the minds of people and to create a particular image by formal public display. Therefore, there was nothing new in the employment of this public event for propaganda purposes - although some ceremonies included innovations such as the coronation of Henry IV by the Holy Oil of Beckett. For example, there were similarities between the royal entry of Richard II into London in 1392 and the royal entries of Henry V and Henry VI - the comparison is beyond the scope of this chapter-, although they all happened in different contexts and had distinct purposes.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

One of main objectives of this study has been to challenge the modern historical perception of the historiography of Lancastrian period. Most of the late medievalists still predominantly consider the fifteenth-century chronicles as relatively useless fiction produced for propaganda purposes. There are some exceptions to this such as the ground-breaking works of Paul Strohm and Jenni Nuttall, who have made contributions to a relative change in the perspectives of historians of Lancastrian England about the narrative sources with new methodological approaches. While Strohm tried to read almost all narrative sources as if they were postmodern texts, Jenni Nuttall preferred to employ the theoretical outline developed by the early modern historian J.G.A Pocock, which attaches the utmost importance to the analysis of the political discourse within the relationship between text and context. However, their studies seem to ignore the erudite analysis of the historical writing. Further, Strohm and his followers still do not see the chronicles as valuable sources in themselves but as a sort of postmodern fiction. In this sense, the historiography of Lancastrian England needs to be rescued from this negative and pejorative perception.

I began to work on the chronicles of the Lancastrian period with this idea. Thus, I wanted to make a plausible contribution to the revision of views already-

established about late medieval historical writing since the late nineteenth and early twentieth-century Whig interpretations of William Stubbs and Charles Lethbridge Kingsford on the chronicles. Although there have been some changes in the last decades in the course of studies of fifteenth-century English history, the historiography of the historical writing still demands much interest.

Unlike the developments in the early modern and modern English historiography; Whig teleological historiographical categories still determine the perceptions of historians interested in late medieval English historiography. For this reason, the primary source material is still neglected. Once the fifteenth century has been regarded as a setback and disruption in the evolution towards perfection in the chain of historical teleology, then the most significant written records of the century have been ignored and dismissed as fictitious propaganda.

In conjunction with the first comprehensive objective, another essential purpose of this study was to question whether the chronicles written in Lancastrian England can be evaluated as propaganda texts in the service of the Lancastrian government. This question certainly brings us another question: was there really a Lancastrian historiography? This thesis actually revolves around these two interrelated questions. All the chapters, in consistency with each other, attempted to deconstruct and historicise the evidence available in the chronicles by looking at the most important themes, which have been conventionally regarded as the Lancastrian production for legitimisation and propaganda of the dynasty. In general terms, this thesis is the first attempt in modern scholarship to read the chronicles of the Lancastrian period independent of a misuse of the term "propaganda." I tried to show that propaganda is not precisely a convenient term, a kind of misnomer, to define the chronicles of Lancastrian rule. Propaganda is purely a modern and

deceptive term. It stands roughly for the various visual and textual instruments designed to influence opinions and perceptions of wider sections of the public, in other words, the masses. Therefore, propaganda texts must be simple and direct to manipulate the views and opinions of its addressee.

First of all, in my study, in different cases, I questioned whether the Lancastrians had a large propaganda machine and a systematic organisation to direct and affect the views and emotions of the people for the legitimisation of their dynasty. The themes of Chapter 3 and Chapter 6 were directly concerned with the visual aspects of propaganda such as the accession of Henry IV in front of the gathering people after the declaration of Richard II's abdication and the coronations and the royal entries of the Lancastrian kings. It is clear that the Lancastrians successfully stage-managed these events to influence public opinion. As discussed in Chapter 6, the Lancastrians, under the directorship of Henry VI's regent, the Duke of Bedford, employed some propaganda instruments to manipulate the public opinion for the legitimacy of the child king and the dual monarch, Henry VI, in the midst of the crisis caused by English losses to the French in the war especially throughout the 1420s.

On the other hand, Henry V always favoured ostentatious display as the embodiment of the ideal of perfect kingship. The messianic royal entry into London was, for him, a great opportunity to consolidate his power in domestic politics and reinforce his position against the opponents of the French war. The situation in the case of Henry IV was somewhat different. He was a king, who had come to the throne by criticising the ostentatious display of Ricardian kingship and one of his promises to his subjects was the simplicity and modesty of kingly style. But, as stated above, the coronations and other public ceremonies were propaganda events in

themselves. Henry IV, as a very pragmatic man, must have wished to take advantage of the disturbance in Westminster on the day of the declaration of Richard II's abdication, to make his accession easier and more legitimate. These are just some hypotheses relying upon the historical evidence about the intentions of the Lancastrians. But, it is very explicit that there was not a systematic and developed Lancastrian propaganda machine.

In any case, the chronicles of the period were not propaganda pieces. To think this is impossible, when their shape and the aims of the chroniclers are considered. On the one hand, they were not short, clear and manipulative texts to influence the public opinion. For example, Thomas Elmham's chronicle had a very obscure language even very difficult to be understood by his contemporaries. On the other hand, the intention of most chroniclers, apart from the compilers of the *Brut* and the *London Chronicles*, was not to reach a wider audience. While Walsingham and the compiler of the *Eulogium* wrote for their fellow-monks, Usk was motivated by obvious personal reasons.

As for Thomas Elmham, according to the internal evidence in the introduction of chronicle, his work had to be read merely by the learned, not the ordinary people. Since ordinary men were not able to understand the deeds of Henry V, it would become very dangerous to relate his actions and policies to them. This was the main reason why Elmham employed an obscure language in his chronicle. All these examples show us that the chroniclers were motivated by their personal interests and purposes as they started writing their works. They were not commissioned historians, unlike the compilers of the St.Denys chronicle in France in the same period. Besides, apart from several surviving manuscripts of the *London Chronicles* and the *Brut*, the circulation of these chronicles was very limited.

Starting with Chapter 2, I analysed the approaches of the chroniclers of the Lancastrian period to some themes, traditionally taken at face value by modern scholars, as the reflections of propagandistic accounts in the chronicles to legitimise the Lancastrian dynasty. Chapter 2 provided a full insight into the problem of the hereditary right of Henry IV. Due to the fact that Henry was an usurper, the claim by descent was the most significant but the least convincing argument of the Lancastrians. Perhaps, for this reason, Henry IV wanted to search for a justification from the previous chronicles for his claim because the chroniclers were always considered throughout the Middle Ages as reliable sources, true recording of the facts. The contemporary chronicles often pointed to the succession problem in their accounts beginning from the late fourteenth century. This is the evidence that the problem was a public issue. But, their narratives were not consistent with each other and determined by factors such as the patronage and personal relations as displayed in the case of Adam Usk and Thomas Walsingham.

Chapter 3 is a striking example of how modern scholars have distorted the facts to justify their arguments. The existence of the notion in almost all chronicles of the period that Henry's title was accepted by the common consent of the estates has been the source of misperception. This has been taken for granted as a demonstration of common consent or parliamentary approval for Henry IV's accession. So, according to this view, the chroniclers were the mere instruments in the propagation of this idea. I showed in that chapter that Henry IV always attached importance to claim by descent and never thought to take the approval of Parliament for his accession although the common consent of all the estates has always been the desire and need of all kings. In this case study, the description of the chronicle sources have been read comparatively and it has been concluded that the available reference to the

notion of common consent is just the recording of the event, which was propaganda in itself.

It is true that the recording of the events was the preliminary intention of the chroniclers but this does not mean that they were unaware of the intellectual ideas of their time. The chroniclers of the Lancastrian period wrote extensively on the principle of the common good, and this was not from a coincidental recording of the facts. Rather, there were some basic notions constituting their opinions. In this sense, in Chapter 4, around the theme of the "common good," which I evaluated in its broadest meaning as the protection of the well-being of the king's subjects, I attempted to analyse the integral relationship between the well-entrenched notions about the duties of a king, the highest authority of the medieval political society, and the evidence in the chronicles. It seems that chroniclers such as Walsingham, Usk as literate men, were apparently influenced by the medieval theoretical and political ideas which had been widely circulated in their society. The common good was the vital principle for the chroniclers and it became the focus of criticism against the Lancastrian government of Henry IV when he caused the disappointment of his subjects.

The explicit criticism of Henry IV, which can be easily found in the chronicles, has left its place in the implicit criticism and relative doubts about whether Henry V would be a good king. Until 1415, when the English defeated the French in the Battle of Agincourt, this was the situation. Later on, when the Lancastrian regime began to collapse after the loss of the English lands under the majority of Henry VI, principle of the common good started to be articulated very explicitly. In Chapter 5, I demonstrated this change in the chronicles and how the chroniclers started to use the concept of "common weal" to denote the political

opposition to the Lancastrian government in accord with the changing political language of the 1450s.

The subject of this thesis is propaganda, and in Chapter 6 I focused on the most important propaganda events of late medieval England, the coronations and royal entries, which also included many religious and symbolic elements. Since these events involved several visual devices, they were the most effective means of manipulating and impressing the public. All three Lancastrian kings wanted to exploit the opportunities of these events and could successfully manage the scene. However, the chroniclers were not the part of these propaganda events. They were merely relating the events that they regarded important for their narratives and readers.

In summary, from the analysis of the chronicles and discussion of the evidence included in them within the historical context, it can be asserted that the chronicles had relatively freedom of expression and were independent of the manipulation of the Lancastrians. This does not mean that the Lancastrians kings had no interest in the chronicles. As I have stated before, Henry IV consulted the chronicles as a typical medieval king and Henry V had its own chronicles. According to John Blackman, who wrote a short tract in the 1480s telling of the piety and virtues of Henry VI, the king saw and "understouden many dyvers writyngs and cronicles."[460] We are not sure whether he read the chronicles produced specifically during the reigns of his father and grandfather, but we can be sure that if he did read those facts, he would certainly have said that there was no Lancastrian historiography.

[460] Blacman, *Henry the Sixth*, 27.

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